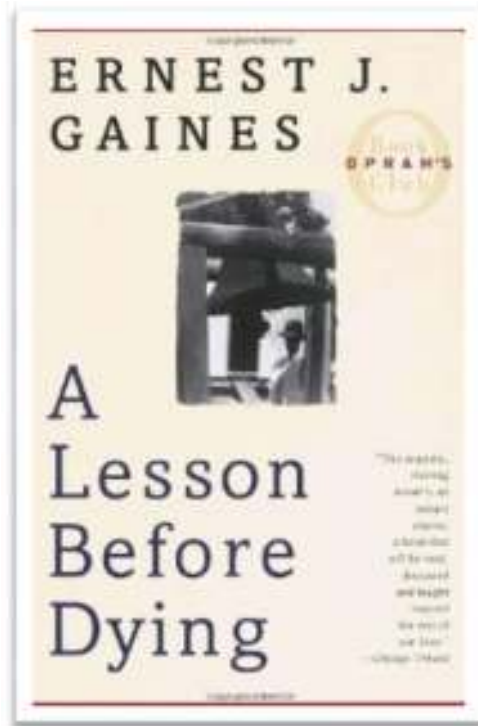


Summer Reading Assignment Pre-AICE English First Language 0500



ASSIGNMENT:

You are to read *A Lesson Before Dying** by Ernest Gaines. Once you complete the reading, you will write a 500-1,000 word **letter** to the author. Tell the author how reading his work (include the name of the book in your letter) somehow changed your way of thinking about yourself or the world around you. Make a connection between yourself and a character or an event in the story. Did the book mirror your life in some way? What questions did the author force you to ask yourself or others?

Do not summarize the plot of the book. Why? Because the author wrote the story and already knows what happened. What the author doesn't know is the way the book affected you. Be honest, personal, and conversational. Exploring why you react the way you do to literature is a valuable lesson because it teaches you about yourself.

SYNOPSIS

*A Lesson Before Dying**, is set in a small Cajun community in the late 1940s. Jefferson, a young black man, is an unwitting party to a liquor store shoot out in which three men are killed; the only survivor, he is convicted of murder and sentenced to death. Grant Wiggins, who left his hometown for the university, has returned to the plantation school to teach. As he struggles with his decision whether to stay or escape to another state, his aunt and Jefferson's godmother persuade him to visit Jefferson in his cell and impart his learning and his pride to Jefferson before his death. In the end, the two men forge a bond as they both come to understand the simple heroism of resisting—and defying—the expected.

Ernest J. Gaines brings to this novel the same rich sense of place, the same deep understanding of the human psyche, and the same compassion for a people and their struggle that have unformed his previous, highly praised works of fiction.

GRADING:

1. A third of your grade will come from the content of your letter and if you did what was asked of you on the assignment.
2. A third of your grade will come from how well you follow directions.
 - Your paper must be typed in black ink, using 1 inch margins and 12 point font either Times New Roman, Arial, or Calibri.
 - You will need a heading that is typed as well. Your heading should be alligned right and typed. You will include your name, date and period in the heading. Please wait until you get your schedule to type in your Period. Please see a sample below.

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3. The last third of your grade will come from basic grammar. Basic grammar is the correct use of
 - Capitalization
 - End punctuation
 - Apostrophes
 - The correct form of words such as *their/there/they're* and *your/you're*
 - Spelling
 - Writing a proper book title
 - Writing proper letter format; you must decide if you will need to use a business letter format or a personal letter format.

This assignment will be due **Wednesday, August 20, 2014.**

***This book is rated PG-13 due to a small bit of content. If you are not comfortable with your child reading this book then he or she will read *Kidnapped* by Robert Louis Stevenson and complete the same assignment but for this book.**

