

Honors English 2

East of Eden by John Steinbeck

Honors English 2 Summer Reading 2020

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This is a long novel, but SUCH a good one. It's EPIC! East of Eden is an allegorical novel about the struggle between good and evil in human nature that will relate to other works we will read throughout your sophomore year. We will come back to it in discussion time and again, and its powerful themes and compelling characters will keep you reading. Enjoy!

Summer Reading Objectives

Thorough and thoughtful completion of the study guide will prepare students to do the following:

1. review major literary elements to be covered throughout the year
2. participate in class discussions and activities related to the novel
3. understand and interpret complex literature and monitor their own comprehension
4. take a novel test over author information, characters, plot, setting, themes, and motifs

Grading of the Study Guide

- I will collect the study guide on the **first** day of school.
- The study guide will count as a 100-point quiz grade.
- I am looking for thoughtful, thorough answers. Students are to do their own work—do not refer to Spark Notes, Cliff's Notes, etc. Do not work together. Do not use answers you got from any other student. I will know, and a zero/cheating offense is the worst way to start next year's class. **You will get *more* credit for a wrong answer that is your own than for a correct answer that is copied or re-hashed from another source, including your parents, friends, and online sources.**

Further Activities/Assessments

During discussions and activities in class, students will:

1. learn information about John Steinbeck and discuss how his background influenced his writing style
2. analyze the role the setting plays in the novel
3. analyze characters in the novel
4. study the parallels in the novel between the biblical story of Cain and Abel and the conflicts between the characters in the novel
5. analyze and discuss the major themes and philosophical ideas of the novel

Following discussions in class, students will take a test over the novel.

Instructions

Type answers to all questions. Remember to answer thoroughly (usually 1-3 sentences per question) and thoughtfully!

Part 1 (Ch. 1-11)

1. Discuss the battle between good and evil foreshadowed in the 3rd paragraph of the first chapter.
2. Who are the Hamiltons? Describe the main characters in this family.
3. Who are the Trasks? Describe how the different members of the family relate to each other (e.g., how well do they get along?).
4. Compare/contrast Adam and Charles Trask.
5. Describe how Charles changes while Adam is gone.
6. How does Steinbeck describe Cathy Ames when he first introduces her? Do you agree with this description?
7. How does Cathy's life intersect with the Trasks'?
8. Ask Your Own Question! Come up with your own original discussion question that you feel is important for part one. Then, explain WHY it is an important question. (You must explain). Then, briefly answer it.

Part 2 (Ch. 12-22)

1. How does the society view the turn of the century?
2. How do the lives of the Hamiltons and the Trasks intersect?
3. Who is Lee, and what is his role in the Trask family?
4. Why is Samuel Hamilton uncomfortable around Cathy?
5. What happens during and after the birth of the twins?
6. Describe Faye and "Kate's" life with her.
7. How does Adam change after Cathy leaves? Why?
8. What does Lee say are the greatest fears a child can have? How do these fears relate to what has happened in the book thus far?
9. Ask Your Own Question! Come up with your own original discussion question that you feel is important for part two. Then, explain WHY it is an important question. (You must explain). Then, briefly answer it.

Part 3 (Ch. 23-33)

1. How do both Samuel and Tom Hamilton begin to change in Ch. 23?
2. Explain the various interpretations of *timshel* as described in Ch. 24. Why do the characters feel these distinctions are important?
3. Briefly describe the reunion between Adam and Kate.
4. Compare/contrast Cal and Aron.
5. Who is Abra? Briefly describe her as we first meet her.
6. What are some of Cal's internal conflicts in these chapters?
7. Describe Dessie's relationship with Tom and how her death affects him.
8. Ask Your Own Question! Come up with your own original discussion question that you feel is important for part three. Then, explain WHY it is an important question. (You must explain). Then, briefly answer it.

Part 4 (Ch. 34-55)

1. What does Steinbeck explain is the measuring stick for the worth of one's life (Ch. 34)? Do you agree with him? Explain.
2. Describe Aron's relationship with Abra.
3. How do the twins' react to Adam's failed produce venture?
4. Briefly describe the scene where Cal meets his mother.
5. Who is Ethel, and how does she pose a problem for Kate?
6. What does Cal do with the money that Adam rejects?
7. Why does Cal show Aron their mother?
8. What is the significance of Adam's dying words to Cal?
9. Ask Your Own Question! Come up with your own original discussion question that you feel is important for part four. Then, explain WHY it is an important question. (You must explain). Then, briefly answer it.