



11th Grade Summer Reading

2021-2022

The following list contains the reading assignments for both the 11th grade CP and Honors American Literature class and the AP English Language class. Please complete the reading and written assignment for the class you will be taking.

11th Grade – All students will read the book of *Romans* from the *New Testament*

CP and Honors American Literature - *October Sky* by Homer Hickam: **Written assignment pages. 1-2**

AP English Language and Composition – Please read both books and take chapter notes on *Fast Food Nation* only. **In addition, complete the questions on pages 3-5 for *Nickel & Dimed on (Not) Getting by In America*. Written assignments will be collected the first day of class.**

Nickel & Dimed on (Not) Getting by In America by Barbara Ehrenreich
Fast Food Nation – The Dark Side of the All-American Meal by Eric Schlosser

Must purchase *The Language of Composition: Reading, Writing, Rhetoric*
Publisher: Bedford/St Martins ISBN: 978-0-312-45094-6 Authors: Shea, Scanlon, and Aufses 2008 edition only.

11th Grade American Literature Summer Reading

***October Sky* Questions**

1. List five obstacles that Homer and the Rocket Boys faced and tell how they overcame each one.

Obstacle

How they overcame the obstacle

2. At one point in the book, Ike Bykovsky says to Homer, “You don’t give up, do you?” and Homer replies, “I can’t.” Tell about a time when you did not give up and the results.

3. Homer could not have met his goal on his own. Success is always a team effort. List five members of Homer’s “team” and tell how each person helped Homer reach his goal.

Team Member

How Each Helped Homer

4. In the novel, Homer tells his dad that Dr. Wernher von Braun is not his hero. Who was Homer’s hero? Why?

5. Homer also told his dad, “I come to believe that I got it in me to be somebody in this world.” What led Homer to believe in himself in this way? How might this affect his future?

6. A person with a “growth mindset” believes that we can change our own abilities. Someone with a “fixed mindset” believes that our abilities will not change. Which mindset did Homer have? Which mindset do you have? Why should your mindset matter to you?

7. What was your favorite part of *October Sky*? Why?

11th Grade AP Language and Composition Summer Reading Questions for *Nickel & Dimed on (Not) Getting by in America* (permission to be granted by teacher/guidance counselor to take this class)

Nickel & Dimed: On (Not) Getting by in America
Summer Reading for AP Language and Composition 2021-2022

Introduction- Getting Ready

1. Near the outset, Ehrenreich (speaking of her own sister) employs the term “wage slave.” What does she mean by this?
2. What are the three rules the author sets for herself at the beginning of *Nickel & Dimed*? Does she ever break from them? If so, why in your view, does she do so?
3. Early on, the author tells us that she has a Ph. D. in biology. How, if at all, do her training bring to the “old-fashioned journalism” of this book?
4. Why does Ehrenreich assert in her Introduction that “a story about waiting for buses would not be very interesting to read”? What are the context and rationale for this remark? And given as much, do you agree?
5. What are three pre-conceptions, questions, thoughts, or observations you have before reading the rest of the book (based on her introduction)?

Chapter 1-Serving in Florida

6. Chapter One, Ehrenreich notes that, in terms of low-wage work, “the want ads are not a reliable measure of the actual jobs available at any particular time.” Explain why this is so.
7. At one point, Ehrenreich details the living conditions of her fellow workers at the Hearthsides. Reviewing these arrangements, explain how each set-up compares with the author’s own “\$500 efficiency” quarters.
8. Waiting tables at Jerry’s the author meets a young dishwasher named George. Who is he? What is his story? Why do he and Ehrenreich befriend one another? And why does she not “intervene” when she learns from an assistant manager that George is thought to be a thief?
9. On her first-and last-day of housekeeping in Key West, Ehrenreich is met by a manager who addresses her as “babe” and gives her “a pamphlet emphasizing the need for a positive attitude.” When and where else, throughout the book, does the author encounter cheap talk or hollow slogans in her endeavors as a low-wage worker? What purposes might such empty language serve? Why is it so prevalent?
10. In an extended footnote in Chapter Two, Ehrenreich explains how “the point” of the housecleaning service where she is employed “is not so much to clean as to create

the appearance of having been cleaned.” Why is this? Why the deceit? Why Does the Maids outfit not clean its client’s home.

Chapter 2 – Scrubbing in Maine

11. “The hands-and-knees approach is a definite selling point for corporate cleaning services like The Maids,” the author writes. Explains why this “old fashioned way” of housecleaning is thus appealing. Why does it seem to, as Ehrenreich puts it, “gratify the consumers of maid services”?
12. Buying groceries with a voucher at Shop-n-Save in Maine, Ehrenreich notes of the checkout woman ringing up her purchases: “I attempt to thank her, but she was looking the other way at nothing in particular.” What might such body language mean? Why if at all is it telling?
13. Looking back on Chapter Two as a whole, what connections would you make between maids and poverty, and maids and “invisibility”? Refer to the text itself when making your links.
14. Who is Budgie? Why does Ehrenreich tell us to let Budgie “be a stand-in”? Also, would it be accurate to say that author’s efforts to find a safe and affordable place to live were least successful in Minnesota? Explain why or why not.
15. What are three observations, thoughts, and/or questions that you have regarding her efforts and “study” of inequality in Maine?

Chapter 3- Selling in Minnesota

16. Paraphrase the brief “story within a story” represented by the character called Caroline. What is Caroline’s tale? Why does Ehrenreich get in touch with this person, and what does she learn from her?
17. As her stint at Walmart winds down, the author mentions to several of her colleagues that they “could use a union here”- only, as she herself readily admits, she is “not a union organizer any more than [she is] Walmart ‘management material.’” So why, then, is she making efforts at unionizing? What has led her to these efforts? What are her reasons, grievances, motivations, and goals?
18. In her chapter “Selling in Minnesota,” Ehrenreich asserts: “Wherever you look, there is no alternative to the mega-scale corporate order, from which every form of local creativity and initiative has been abolished by distant home offices.” Talk about whether this is true in your own experience. If not, why not? If so, when have you seen evidence to support this claim? Try to use our own examples and impressions here-not Ehrenreich’s examples.
19. Describing the food at a Florida restaurant where she works, Ehrenreich calls it “your basic Ohio cuisine with a tropical twist.” Still later, she writes that certain clothes on sale at her Minnesota Walmart are “seemingly aimed at fourth grade

teachers with important barbecues to attend.” Discuss the biting humor-the sharp and sometimes even mocking wit-appearing throughout this book. How, if at all, does such levity make Ehrenreich’s arguments more effective? And were there instances when you thought her humor went too far? Explain.

20. This book is of course, more than a report on, and expose of, (not) betting by in America” -it is also a detailed critique. To this end, the bulk of its criticism might well be directed at the Walmart Empire. Is this appropriate in your view? Explain. Given that Walmart is far away the world’s largest company, is it right to expect the retail mega-chain to be fair and respectful of its employees? Explain.

Evaluation-

21. At the outset of her Evaluation chapter, the author seems to arrive at a new understanding of the phrase “unskilled labor.” Explain this new understanding. Do you agree with it? Why or why not?
22. Describe the problems that Ehrenreich has with how the “poverty level” is calculated in this country. Is she correct on this score, in your view? Explain. Also, how does one’s understanding of the poverty level-Ehrenreich’s or anyone else’s - relate to food costs, and to the author’s assertion that our “wages are too low and rents too high.”
23. What is the “money taboo”- and why and how does it function, as Ehrenreich puts it, “most effectively among the lowest-paid people”?
24. Why does Ehrenreich refer to low-wage workers, at the close of her book, as “the major philanthropists of our society”?