



## Upper School Summer Reading 2010

All School Book:

### Three Cups of Tea

One Man's Mission to Promote Peace  
One School at a Time

By Greg Mortenson and David Oliver Relin  
Penguin Books

Early in the fall trimester we will plan an activity that will allow students to discuss these books with teachers and peers. Parents are invited to join in reading and discussing the all school book. In addition, all students must post one response of approximately 100 words at <http://rhpusummerreading2010.blogspot.com>. Posting this blog will result in credit toward your fall trimester history grade.

Discussion questions are provided to help you think about *Three Cups of Tea*. Answering one or more of the questions may help you decide what to put in your response. You may wish to concentrate on the material in Chapters 1-10 and 19-23.

### ***Three Cups of Tea***

**QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION** (Adapted from the Viking Reading Guide question for *Three Cups of Tea*)

1. At the heart of the book is a powerful but simple political message: we each as individuals have the power to change the world, one cup of tea at a time. Yet the book powerfully dramatizes the obstacles in the way of this philosophy: bloody wars waged by huge armies, prejudice, religious extremism, cultural barriers. What do you think of the "one cup of tea at a time" philosophy? Do you think Mortenson's vision can work for lasting and meaningful change?
2. There is a telling passage about Mortenson's change of direction at the start of the book: "One evening, he went to bed by a yak dung fire a mountaineer who'd lost his way, and one morning, by the time he'd shared a pot of butter tea with his hosts and laced up his boots, he'd become a humanitarian who'd found a meaningful path to follow for the rest of his life." What made Mortenson particularly ripe for such a transformation? Has anything similar happened in your own life?



3. The authors write that “the Balti held the key to a kind of uncomplicated happiness that was disappearing in the developing world.” This peaceful simplicity of life seems to be part of what attracts Mortenson to the villagers. Discuss the pros and cons of bringing “civilization” to the mountain community.
4. After Haji Ali’s family saves Greg’s life, he reflects that he could never “imagine discharging the debt he felt to his hosts in Korphe.” Discuss this sense of indebtedness as key to Mortenson’s character. Why was Mortenson compelled to return to the region again and again? In your opinion, does he repay his debt by the end of the book?
5. “I expected something like this from an ignorant village mullah, but to get those kinds of letters from my fellow Americans made me wonder whether I should just give up,” Mortenson remarked after he started getting hate mail in the wake of September 11. What were your reactions to the letters Mortenson received?
6. Mortenson hits many bumps in the road—he’s broke, his girlfriend dumps him, he is forced to build a bridge before he can build the school, he puts on weight and drives his family crazy. Discuss his repeated brushes with failure and how they influenced your opinion of Mortenson and his efforts.
7. Is Mortenson someone you’d like to get to know, work with, have as a neighbor or friend?
8. And finally—What did this book make you think about?

## **English Department Books**

All Upper School students read at least one book for summer homework. Students may expect discussions and essays on the summer reading book during the first week of class. Students in honors or Advanced Placement class have additional requirements, including essays that must be handed in on the first day of class during the fall trimester.

Ninth Grade (English I): Choose one book and expect to write an essay on it during the first week of class:

Card, Orson Scott. *Ender’s Game*  
Kingsolver, Barbara. *The Bean Trees*



Tenth Grade (English II and English II Honors): British and Continental Literature

Please read *Dracula*, by Bram Stoker (The Literary Touchstone edition is recommended, but another unabridged edition will be acceptable.) You will be expected to write an essay on *Dracula* during the first week of class.

English II Honors must also read one of the following books and should be expected to demonstrate their understanding of the book during the first few weeks of class.

- Austen, Jane. *Pride and Prejudice*
- Ballard, J.G. *Empire of the Sun*
- Bronte, Charlotte. *Jane Eyre*
- Dickens, Charles. *Great Expectations*
- Defoe, Daniel. *Robinson Crusoe*
- Dostoevsky, Feodor. *Crime and Punishment*
- Eliot, George. *Silas Marner*
- Orwell, George. *1984*.
- Remarque, Erich Maria. *All Quiet on the Western Front*
- Swift, Jonathan. *Gulliver's Travels*
- Voltaire. *Candide* (Do not choose this book if you are taking AP European History)
- Wiesel, Elie. *Night*

Eleventh Grade (English III and Advanced Placement English Literature)

Please read *Of Mice and Men* by John Steinbeck. Expect to complete an essay test and some assignments on the novel during the first week of class.

Twelfth Grade (English IV and AP English Language)

Please read *The Stranger* by Albert Camus. Expect to complete an essay test and some assignments on the novel during the first week of class.

Additional Assignments for AP English Literature and AP English Language

Advanced Placement English Literature: Read one of the following contemporary novels and complete the questions found on the RHP website.



## Contemporary Novels

Dorris, Michael. *Yellow Raft on Blue Water*

Ellison, Ralph, *Invisible Man*

Foer, Jonathan Safran. *Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close*

Gutterson, David. *Snow Falling on Cedars*

Kingsolver, Barbara. *The Poisonwood Bible*

Morrison, Toni. *Beloved*

O'Brien, Tim. *The Things They Carried* or *Going After Cacciato*

Proulx, Annie. *The Shipping News*

Advanced Placement English Language: Read one of the following nonfiction memoirs and complete the questions (questions found on RHP website).

Haley, Alex. *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*

Rodriguez, Richard. *Hunger for Memory*

Walls, Jeanette. *The Glass Castle*