

Summer Reading

for students entering Women in Literature

In the second half of your summer vacation, read *A Thousand Splendid Suns*, by Khaled Hosseini, and complete the written assignment detailed below. This thesis-based essay assignment will provide teachers with a sample of your writing and, if it is submitted on the first day of class, earn you extra credit in the first marking period.

Throughout the novel Mariam and Laila struggle against various forces that are attempting to define them as women. What harmful societal, political, religious, and/or personal expectations do both women face in their efforts to overcome feelings of inadequacy? How do they redefine, or attempt to redefine, the roles that have been forced upon them? How relevant are the challenges they face to the lives of contemporary readers? Do they carry more importance in particular regions of the world, like the one in which the novel is set, or should they instead be considered universal?

Be sure to organize your ideas, paying specific attention to the development of your thesis, the structure of your body paragraphs, and the quality and quantity of your support from the text. Finally, begin your essay with a title that reflects the focus of your thesis.

Remember to cite any and all outside resources to which you refer in your writing, either directly, through quotations, or indirectly, through paraphrase. Should you have any questions about what to cite or how to cite it, please consult Purdue's Online Writing Lab (OWL), which can be found at <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>

If you have any questions, please email your teacher at: dosora@hvrhs.org

Enjoy your reading!