

## AP European History: Summer Reading Review Guidelines

Your summer reading assignment is the book *Year of Wonders* by Geraldine Brooks, ISBN 0142001430.

You will write a 500-750 word critical review of the book that is due the first Monday of the second week of school. Make sure to remember that a review is ‘critical’ and that the desired goal is an evaluation, not merely a ‘report’ of the book’s contents. DO NOT provide a summary of the full contents or outline the story chapter by chapter. You should, above all, be evaluating the contributions the book makes to the historical understanding of the subject. Your review should, at the very least, address the following questions; however, if you feel there are other issues that should be discussed, be sure to include them.

- What is the main subject and central thesis or argument of the book?
- Based on your previous readings about the subject, how accurate is the information provided by the author? Are her interpretations and conclusions valid?
- What is the quality of the author’s writing? Is she successful in communicating her ideas in a clear and persuasive way? Are her characters believable? Why or why not?

These questions should not be answered by creating bullets or a numbered list, but in essay form. Write as if you were explaining and evaluating the book for an audience who has not read it. *If you believe serious criticisms are warranted, make sure you are respectful in the way you present them* – remember this should be a professional academic review.

You should remember that a book review is an essay, and that much of the interest on the reader’s part will come from the quality and clarity of **your** writing. You should always try to have a main point or thesis in your review. This is not as obvious as it might seem; all too often book reviews consist of only a random series of paragraphs that make one observation after another about the book without ever reaching some clear conclusion. Make sure to give your review a clear sense of cohesion and organization. Citations need only be from the novel, as you should not cite any outside information in your essay. Therefore, you only need page numbers from portions of the novel you cite rather than author’s name and page number.

The review should be typed using MLA format, 12 point, Times New Roman font, double spaced, with 1” margins. Printed copies of your reviews are due in-class – **stapled**, and in the Haiku drop box by 3:45 p.m. on the **first Monday of the second week of school!**

Your review will be graded according to the following rubric:

10% Introduction and Thesis

20% Grammar, Spelling, Writing

60% Main Argument (i.e. – how well did you address the required questions and/or other questions) & Conclusion.

10% Citation

If you have any further questions, comments, concerns, moans, groans, criticisms, whines, gripes, or complaints, feel free to e-mail me and I will most likely get back to you. [bhall@episcopalcollegiate.org](mailto:bhall@episcopalcollegiate.org)