



Olathe South High School  
1640 E. 151<sup>st</sup> Street, Olathe, KS 66062

Welcome Honors Sophomore English Students!

With summer come sweltering days, family barbecues, and summer reading! We are excited that you are ready to challenge yourself and we are eager to begin this journey of reading, writing, and thinking together.

The summer reading assignment is to read *Purple Hibiscus* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie and to begin writing thematic logs over the novel. Log directions and a sample log are attached. The first thematic log will be due **Friday, August 15, 2025**. In addition, a quotation assessment over *Purple Hibiscus* will be given in the first few days of school. We will use your thematic logs to begin an in-depth analysis of the novel and to begin a writing assignment. In addition, be sure to save your work in electronic format, as you will turn your logs into turnitin.com immediately upon your return to school. Consider challenging yourself to read at least forty to fifty pages a week. Good time management skills will help alleviate stress and produce better quality work. See an optional schedule later in the packet for a suggestion on how to approach the assignment.

**Please Note:**

\*Assignments should be typed.

\*Since these are individual assignments, no two will look exactly alike. In other words, do not copy a peer's work or allow your work to be copied by another. Furthermore, we do not consider working with a peer as individual work.

\*You are also explicitly forbidden to use any form of AI to generate or modify your writing for this assignment. Your argumentation and analysis must be your own.

\*For most major works, study guides such as Cliff's Notes, Spark Notes, and such are readily available. We are very familiar with them. Please realize that a) these are not reliable, as they are often composed by college students, and b) that tests and essays are based on the novel, NOT the study guides. The only way to truly understand a work is to read it.

One of the many reasons for summer reading is to keep you mentally active during the summer months and to "hit the ground running" when school begins in August. Again, we know that you have chosen an advanced English class because you want to challenge yourself to grow in the areas of reading, writing, and thinking. We know your teachers have prepared you well to meet this challenge, and we are excited to help you be successful. We are very proud of our Advanced Placement students and their accomplishments. With a positive attitude and work ethic, you, too, can be part of something special.

If you have any questions during the summer, please send either of us an e-mail. In addition, Mr. Gibbens (rm. 215) and Ms. Hightower (rm. 304) will be available on **Wednesday, August 6, 2025 from 10:00 a.m. to noon**. This would be an excellent opportunity for you to have any questions answered well ahead of the due date.

Sincerely,

Mr. Marc Gibbens & Ms. Bailey Hightower  
Sophomore Honors Instructor Sophomore Honors Instructor  
mdgibbensos@olatheschools.org bnhightower@olatheschools.org

**Assignment:** Thematic Logs for *Purple Hibiscus* by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie  
(20 pts – Due Friday, August 15, 2025)

**Thematic Ideas**

Tradition vs. Change

Justice vs. Force

Obedience vs. Rebellion

Poverty vs. Affluence

Appearance vs. Reality

Parental Relationships vs. Sibling Relationships

**Thematic Logs:** You will eventually write three theme logs from the novel **Purple Hibiscus**. Choose **one** of the above six thematic ideas to be used in your logs.

Theme Log #1 (Due on Friday, August 15) – **passage must be from p. 1-100**

Theme Log #2 (Due after school begins) – passage must be from p. 101-200

Theme Log #3 (Due after school begins) – passage must be from p. 201-end of the novel

**Optional Note-taking:** Since you are only writing logs and not filling out study guides for the novel, we **strongly recommend** taking notes to help you remember character names, plot, symbolism, etc.

This could be:

- Post-it noting significant pages with a brief comment about the page's significance.
- Choose 2-4 of the thematic ideas and post-it note pages where you notice those ideas or oppositions making an appearance.
  - This would have the added benefit of providing you with several relevant passages to choose from when the time comes to write your thematic logs.
- Your own method of note-taking
  - Annotating the book
  - Keeping notes in a notebook

## **Steps to Follow to Write an Effective Theme Log**

1. Type your name in your document.
2. Insert a two-column table into your document. (This can be done easily by using the “Insert” and then “Table” function in Microsoft Word.)
3. Type the excerpt in the left column, citing the page number and chapter at the end of the excerpt. Be sure to provide enough context so that your analysis in the right column is understandable.
4. In the right column, label your excerpt using one of the previously stated thematic ideas.
5. Explain the situation (in other words, what is going on in the story at this time?) and how the excerpt illustrates/supports the thematic idea.
6. Write a theme statement derived from the excerpt.
  - a. This is not merely one word summing up the novel but rather a message the author is trying to convey through a work and the insight it offers into life. Please do not use clichés or trite sayings for the theme statement (e.g. curiosity killed the cat; all you need is love, etc.). Your theme statement should be stated as a complete sentence and should be argumentative (which means that a reasonable person should be able to disagree with it; it ought to require proof).
7. In the idea support section, clearly explain how the evidence from the text supports the theme you have articulated. In order to focus your analysis, please use very short, very focused concrete details in this section.
  - a. There will be a grade deduction if the entries are not in the correct format.

## **5 Common Mistakes to Avoid**

1. Choosing a passage that is too long or too short
  - a. If your passage is too short, you will not be able to write and analyze enough to accomplish the goals of the assignment. If your passage is too long, you will have too much to cover and your idea support may seem incomplete. The ideal length of passage is between  $\frac{1}{2}$  and  $\frac{2}{3}$  of a page when typed up in your table.
2. Not including a full summary of what is happening in your passage
3. Writing a theme statement that is factual.
4. Writing idea support that is shorter than your passage.
5. Not including short quotations as evidence for your argument in your idea support.

## **Use of Model**

When your log(s) are complete, they should look very similar to the model from *To Kill a Mockingbird* that you have been given. Your passages should be approximately the same length; your theme statement should be in full-sentence form; your idea support should be approximately twice the length of the passage you have chosen.

## **Please use an easy to read 12-point type.**

Some students know how they work best and relish the freedom of the summer assignment where they can read and write at their own pace. For other students, however, having a schedule may help with accountability and avoiding procrastination. If you'd like a schedule to follow, consider the one below! There's no pressure to follow it, but you may find it helpful.

**Possible Schedule for the Summer Assignment**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Task</b>
May 2025	Acquire (or make a plan to acquire) <i>Purple Hibiscus</i>
June 1-June 14	Enjoy some decompression time from a crazy school year
June 15-June 20	Read pages 1-50 in <i>Purple Hibiscus</i>
June 21-June 25	Read pages 51-100 in <i>Purple Hibiscus</i>
June 26-June 30	Read pages 101-150 in <i>Purple Hibiscus</i>
July 1-July 9	<p>Get together with a friend or two and talk about the first half of the novel. Here are some questions to discuss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who are the important characters? What are they like? Who are you drawn to? Who are you disliking?</li> <li>• What is the main trouble in the novel? Where does the tension or conflict arise? • What thematic oppositions have you found most relevant and/or frequent so far?</li> <li>• What do you find confusing? (Can you help one another work through any of that confusion?)</li> </ul> <p>If you got together and had an interesting discussion, email Mr. Gibbens or Ms. Hightower! We'd love to hear your thoughts on what you read so far and even answer some questions if you have any confusion you couldn't work through.</p>
July 10-July 15	Read pages 151-200 in <i>Purple Hibiscus</i>
July 16-July 23	Read pages 201-250 in <i>Purple Hibiscus</i>
July 24-July 31	Finish reading <i>Purple Hibiscus</i>
August 1-August 9	<p>Get together with a friend or two and talk about the conclusion of the novel. Here are some questions to discuss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In the end, which of the characters behaved reasonably and justifiably? Why? • Who do you have the most empathy for? Who do you have the least empathy for? Why?</li> <li>• Which characters changed the most from beginning to end? How so? • What thematic oppositions seemed to show up most frequently?</li> <li>• What did you find confusing? (Can you help one another work through any of that confusion?)</li> </ul>
Sunday, Aug. 10	Select the thematic opposition that you would like to write about
Monday, Aug. 11	Select the passage from p. 1-100 you'd like to analyze. Set up your log according to the instruction and type up your passage in the left-hand column.
Tuesday, Aug. 12	Write your thematic idea in the right-hand column. Write your summary of the passage in the situation section. Write an argumentative theme statement.
Wednesday, Aug. 13	Write your paragraph of idea support. <b>Don't forget to include your concrete details!</b>
Thursday, Aug. 14	Re-read everything you've written aloud. Make changes where necessary.
Friday, Aug. 15	Turn in your first completed theme log!

**See Attached Example Log—Pay Attention to the Lengths of Each Section**

Passage	Analysis
<p>1. “As you grow older, you’ll see white men cheat black men every day of your life, but let me tell you something and don’t you forget it-- whenever a white man does that to a black man, no matter who he is, how rich he is, or how fine a family he comes from, that white man is trash.” Atticus was speaking so quietly his last word crashed on our ears. I looked up, and his face was vehement. “There’s nothing more sickening to me than a low grade white man who’ll take advantage of a Negro’s ignorance. Don’t fool yourselves-- it’s all adding up and one of these days we’re going to pay the bill for it. I hope it’s not in you children’s time.” (220-21) Chapter 23</p>	<p><b>Thematic Idea:</b> Racial Prejudice (this should be the same for every journal)</p> <p><b>Situation:</b> After the trial, Jem questions Atticus about the reasoning of the jury members who wrongly convicted Tom Robinson, and of Bob Ewell’s retaliatory conduct against Atticus. Here, Atticus informs Jem of the reality of the unfairness of life, and of certain people’s harsh and unrelenting prejudices.</p> <p><b>Theme Statement:</b> Racial prejudice is incredibly damaging to society; its consequences can be felt not only in the present but in the future.</p> <p><b>Idea Support:</b> Atticus, whose passion for justice and equality never wanes throughout the novel, has just deemed men like Bob Ewell “trash,” a word he pronounces nearly inaudibly, as if the word has no business polluting his vocabulary. Atticus’s disgust is directed at Bob Ewell, who takes advantage of Tom Robinson’s kindness toward his abused and lonely daughter, Mayella. Bob Ewell uses Tom as a scapegoat for the abuse he inflicted on his own daughter. Through Atticus’s whispered words and impassioned face, Jem and Scout understand the gravity of the situation regarding the cheating of a white man. Not only has Tom suffered the yoke of oppression for the color of his skin but now must suffer the harsh consequences for a crime he did not commit. Atticus’ emphatic disgust at the ignorance of a “low-grade white man” soon turns to concern that such hatred will haunt the future generation and more specifically his children. The Bob Ewells and racist jury members of society will continue to color society, so to speak, with their hatred and condemn innocent and harmless men simply because of skin color.</p>

### **List of Characters and Places Pronunciations**

**Kambili Achike:** KOM-billy—fifteen-year-old narrator and daughter of Eugene and Beatrice

**Papa (Eugene Achike)**—father of Kambili and Jaja

**Mama (Beatrice Achike)**—mother of Kambili and Jaja

**Jaja (Chukwuka Achike)**—son of Eugene and Beatrice

**Aunty Ifeoma:** if-ay-OH-ma—sister of Eugene and aunt to Kambili and Jaja

**Amaka:** ah-MAH-kah—fifteen-year-old daughter of Ifeoma

**Obiora:** oh-bee-OH-ra—fourteen-year-old son of Ifeoma

**Chima:** CHEE-ma—seven-year-old son of Ifeoma

**Papa-Nnukwu:** nu-WUK-woo—Father of Eugene and Ifeoma who is an Igbo traditionalist

**Father Amadi:** ah-MAH-dee—young, handsome Nigerian Catholic priest

**Nsukka:** in-SOOK-uh—City where Ifeoma and her family live