

# Summer 2025 Reading Assignments for Rising Upper School Students

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Dear Students,

We have a long tradition of assigning summer reading to keep students enriched over the summer and to help them maintain practice in reading independently. We have found that students need both accountability and guidance to help them read assigned texts thoroughly and thoughtfully.

Your teachers have thought carefully about what we assign for students to read over the summer. The titles we have chosen are directly connected to content we will be teaching this coming school year. We look forward to putting your summer reading book in conversation with the other books that make up your grade's curriculum.

This summer students must complete the summer reading assignment in this packet prior to the first day of the school year. Assignments will be scored and awarded a grade in the participation category. This will not only create a common experience for you to build on in the fall but it will also introduce students and teachers to one another. For you, the student, it will introduce you to the kinds of questions you can expect at the next level. For the teacher, it will introduce them to each individual students' strengths and weaknesses. For both parties, it will create a helpful baseline to reference prior to any major assessments. In sum, our summer reading assignments are created to:

1. Provide accountability for all students to do the summer reading so that the text may be incorporated into the learning of the coming year by creating a common summer experience.
2. Provide support and guidance to students as they are directed toward particular big ideas, themes, and questions that help them articulate their own comprehension of the book.
3. Provide practice in the skills of independent reading, annotation, writing, and creation so that those skills are maintained or even grown over the summer.
4. Establish predictable expectations for the students and a baseline evaluation for the teacher.

You can find your reading assignment on the following pages:

2 - 5	7th Grade Student
6 - 10	8th Grade Student
11	9th Grade Student
12 - 15	10th Grade Student
16 - 22	11th Grade Student
23 - 33	12th Grade Student

If you have any questions please don't hesitate to reach out to me. Enjoy a summer full of rest, recreation, reading, and reflection.

Sincerely,

Kate Friederichs | *Humanities Department Chair*

# Summer 2025 Reading Assignment for a Rising 7th Grade Student

*Genesis & Exodus*

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## Instructions

Read the books of Genesis and Exodus. Answer the following questions as you complete your reading. Some questions will be found in the text, but others will require interpreting to find meaning in the text. Most questions can be answered in a few complete sentences. Several questions call for a “one-chunk paragraph” response. As a reminder, here are the components of a one-chunk paragraph:

- ❖ TS: Topic sentence
  - ❖ CD: Concrete detail
  - ❖ CD/CM: Concrete detail or Commentary
  - ❖ CM: Commentary
  - ❖ C: Closing sentence
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## Genesis Study Questions for Chapters 1-3

In ancient literature, we will explore the creation stories of two different cultures while comparing them with our own. In order to do this, we must examine the creation account as a piece of literature, told to a particular audience at a particular time. While this method does not change our trust in the Truth of Genesis, it will mean that we examine the story as literature with characters, themes, and literary devices. Approach this story as students eager to understand what the story is saying, with fresh eyes, without bringing any preconceived notions about the nature of creation or the characters involved.

1) What is described prior to creation occurring?

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2) Out of what does God create? How is creation formed?

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3) From what is man made? How is this different from the rest of creation?

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4) What instructions does God give man?

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5) How does God describe his creation at the end of the sixth day? What does this suggest about the nature of creation? Incorporate one quote in your answer and cite it using the following example: (Genesis 1:13)

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6) What changes in Genesis 3? What does this explain about the world? Incorporate one quote in your answer and cite in the following way: (Genesis 1:13)

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## Genesis Study Questions for Chapters 4-50

7) What is different about the world after the flood?

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8) What motivates the builders of the Tower of Babel? Are they successful? Incorporate one quote in your answer and cite in the following way: (Genesis 1:13)

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9) Consider the story of Abraham. Was he faithful to God's call? Write your thoughts in bullet points on the Tchart below. Complete sentences are not necessary.

Faithful	Unfaithful

## Exodus Study Questions

10) Who is Moses? How does he become Israel's leader?

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11) What might the plagues communicate about God to Israel? *Answer with a one-chunk paragraph*

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12) Consider the law code revealed to Moses. Is there a common idea the laws communicate?

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13) Consider the tabernacle. What might the elements of the Tabernacle communicate about God? *Answer with a one-chunk paragraph.*

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# Summer 2025 Reading Assignment for a Rising 8th Grade Student

*The Trojan Women* by Euripides

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## Instructions

Read through these questions and prompts before reading the play on pages 457 – 512 of the book we handed out to you. When you get to passages that will help you answer questions, bracket the text and write the number that corresponds to the question. Also annotate your text as you normally would: writing your observations, questions, interpretations, and conclusions in the margin. As you read, you will notice—and possibly be surprised by—the way certain groups of people are portrayed. Use three different colored highlighters to track the following groups: Trojans, Greeks, and gods. When a passage communicates something important about a particular group, highlight those lines with the appropriate color. They will be helpful references as you engage with the questions that follow. When you have finished reading the entire play, answer the following questions using neat and legible handwriting. All answers should be written using complete sentences, with the exception of parts of question 1. Use the following chunky paragraph formats provided below to answer questions 3 and 4:

**One-chunk** paragraph structure:

- ❖ TS: Topic sentence
  - ❖ CD: Concrete detail (in this case, a quote from the play)
  - ❖ CM: Commentary
  - ❖ CM: Commentary
  - ❖ C: Closing sentence
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**Two-chunk** paragraph structure:

- ❖ TS: Topic sentence
- ❖ CD1: Concrete detail (in this case, a quote from the play)
- ❖ CM: Commentary
- ❖ CM: Commentary
- ❖ CD2: Concrete detail (in this case, a quote from the play)
- ❖ CM: Commentary
- ❖ CM: Commentary
- ❖ C: Closing sentence

## Questions and Prompts

1) A great reader does not skip past the things he does not know. When he sees things he does not know, he pauses to dig in and understand. Identify three words through the course of the play that you do not know the definitions of. For each word, name the page number on which it appears, copy the sentence in which it appears, offer a dictionary definition, and then explain your new understanding of the story. Model your responses after the example below.

Unknown word (and pg. #)	Sentence the word is found in	Dictionary definition	New understanding
Obsequies (474)	“And those that fell to the spear were carried home by loving hands...and tended in their <u>obsequies</u> by pious hands.”	Funeral or burial rites	One benefit the Trojans had over the Greeks was that they could receive burial rites by loving family members and buried in their homeland.

Pictured below is an example of a close reading from the *Iliad*.

“Where so furious? How can your hearts so storm within you?”

① Zeus, as the father of gods, has authority over Hera & Athena.

The <sup>Zeus</sup> son of Kronos will not let you stand by the Argives.

Since Zeus has uttered this threat and will make it a thing accomplished:

that he will lame beneath the harness your fast-running horses, and hurl yourselves from the driver’s place, and smash your chariot; and not in the circle of ten returning years would you be whole of the wounds where the stroke of the lightning hits you; so that you may know, gray-eyed goddess, when it is your father you fight with.

② Zeus threatens violence, if they do not obey. Gods cannot die, but they can suffer wounds: ex. Prometheus

③ purpose phrase. Zeus is willing to do violence SO THAT Athena understands she is fighting against someone above her. (Stronger and deserving of her obedience)

④ Iris adds this of her own accord—it was not part of Zeus’s original message.

Yes, you, bold brazen wench, are audacious indeed, if truly you are to lift up your gigantic spear in the face of your father.

⑤ adj.: feeling or showing anger because of something unjust or unworthy

Yet with Hera he is not so angry, neither indignant, since it is ever her way to cross the commands he gives her” (Iliad, 8.413 – 424)

⑥ Does this mean Zeus has done something to earn the disobedience of Hera, but not Athena? (His many affairs?)

⑦ explains why: Hera always disobeys so Zeus is used to it—he expects her to. But Athena usually obeys, so he expects her to keep obeying & is now angry that she isn’t. This doesn’t seem fair.

2) Do a close reading of the passage below following the example I have provided for you. Make at least **three** significant observations. Then answer the question that follows.

What a fool that mortal is

who rests complacent in prosperity!

Fortune is the prey of whims

and like a maniac turns somersaults.

No man for long escapes her jolts. (506)

**In your own words**, what is this passage communicating?

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3) How is Odysseus portrayed in this play? *Answer with a one-chunk paragraph.*

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4) How is Helen portrayed in this play? Provide two different characters' views of Helen through things they say about or to her. *Answer with a two-chunk paragraph.*

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5) Explain each victim's fate. I have done one as an example for you.

Cassandra: This daughter of Priam and priestess of Apollo is given as a war bride to Agamemnon.

Andromache: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Astyanax: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Hecuba: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Now, evaluate: Who received the worst fate? Explain your reasoning.

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\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
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6) Why is it surprising Euripides, a Greek, wrote this play?

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\_\_\_\_\_

# Summer 2025 Reading Assignment for a Rising 9th Grade Student

*Beowulf*

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## Instructions

- 1) **Set up your Commonplace Book for next year.** Purchase a 5.5" x 8.5" lined commonplace journal. Reserve the first two pages for a Table of Contents and label the first entry "Beowulf." We will continue to fill out the Table of Contents as we progress through your Freshman year.
- 2) **Commonplace.** On the fourth page of your commonplace book, you will commonplace. Since Beowulf fights three monsters over the course of the text, you will complete a commonplace for each of the three monsters:
  - a) One commonplace for the fight with Grendel from lines 1 - 1250.
  - b) One commonplace for the fight with Grendel's Mother from lines 1251 - 2199.
  - c) One commonplace for the fight with the Dragon from lines 2200 - 3182.

Please write the passages neatly in black ink and your corresponding reflection in blue ink. Your handwriting should be easily legible. Mistakes should be rare and crossed out with a single line. All passages must be accurately transcribed (words, punctuation, capitalization) and include a citation in the correct format. If the passage is in verse, keep to the author's line breaks. Write each commonplace on a separate page.

Your reflection must demonstrate your effort to interact meaningfully with the text. Your reflection must be thoughtful and go deeper than the surface level. It must do at least one of the following with excellence:

- ❖ Reflects upon the significance of this passage to the story
  - ❖ Considers and questions the ideas within the passage
  - ❖ Compares the ideas in the passage to something else (Scripture, another book/author, CCS culture, your own life, etc.)
- 3) **Answer two questions considering the book as a whole.** For each question, write a one or two-chunk paragraph following the structure shown below. Do these in your commonplace book.

Question 1: Is Beowulf a Christian?

Question 2: Where is there hope, if any, in this poem?

- ❖ TS: Topic sentence
  - ❖ CD1: Concrete detail
  - ❖ CD/CM: Concrete detail **or** Commentary
  - ❖ CM: Commentary
  - ❖ CD2: Concrete detail
  - ❖ CD/CM: Concrete detail **or** Commentary
  - ❖ CM: Commentary
  - ❖ C: Closing sentence
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# Summer 2025 Reading Assignment for a Rising 10th Grade Student

*Utopia* by Thomas More

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## Instructions

Directions: Thomas More's *Utopia* is composed of two books. A set of prompts is posed for each book. From each set, select only one prompt to respond to with a complete body paragraph (8-10 sentences). Your paragraph must include two direct quotes and, if applicable, it must consider evidence from both sides of the question. Your argument must choose a specific side and explain why it is more persuasive than the other one. An example paragraph is offered below to guide your work:

*Example Prompt:* In Utopian society, war is avoided at all costs. When it must be engaged in, Utopia implements controversial strategies to avoid the deaths of Utopian citizens. Does Utopia's policy on war undermine its ideals as a society?

*Example Paragraph:* The Utopians hold an anti-war view of military conflict, which is a noble ideal, but because this policy utilizes foreigners and regards them as expendable, their ideals are hypocritical. The Utopians think they are better than other communities, due to their way of life and their prioritization of the public good, so they try to minimize how often their citizens must fight. As Raphael explains, "They hold their own people dear, and value them so highly that they would not exchange one of their citizens for an enemy's king."<sup>1</sup> The Utopians place great value on their citizens and care about their quality of life. Given this, the Utopian government does not force its people to fight but only hires soldiers who volunteer for the job. This priority is noble because it seeks to preserve the lives of its citizens. At the same time, because of this ideal, Utopia pays foreign soldiers to fight in their defense. One of those groups of mercenaries are called the Zapoletes, and in this passage, Raphael describes how Utopians view their death in battle: "As far as how many Zapoletes get killed, the Utopians never worry about that, for they think they would deserve very well of all mankind if they could exterminate them from the face of the earth that entire disgusting and vicious race."<sup>2</sup> Clearly, the Utopians have no concern for the Zapoletes, who they hire as mercenaries to fight their battles. Raphael's language is over the top, and probably satirical in nature, because he makes no attempt to soften it. Nevertheless, no matter how noble the ideals of the Utopians are, the fruit they produce is elitism towards themselves and contempt towards their neighbors. Their practices foster vices towards their neighbors, not virtues. As a result, these military strategies undermine the values of Utopia.

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## Book One

Check the box of the prompt that you are responding to:

- ☐ This “story” begins with a conversation in which Thomas More—who is the author, an actual advisor of Henry VIII, and a character in this book—urges a foreigner named Raphael to work in the service of a king. Raphael refuses to because of, among other reasons, how the English punish thieves. To explain his answer, Raphael covers work opportunities for the poor, the treatment of soldiers, and sheep barons. In these topics, does Raphael’s anger appear justly founded? If so, what is it based on?
- ☐ The cardinal responds by asking Raphael if he supports the death penalty, and Raphael says no, using Scripture to defend his answer. Does Raphael’s use of Scripture seem accurate or inaccurate, fair or unfair?
- ☐ Whenever Raphael refers to “model communities,” to provide a political alternative to Europe’s entrenched greed, his names for them seem to carry loaded meanings. Tallstoria, for example, simply means tall story; Nolandia obviously means no land; Utopia, likewise, means no place. Why do you think More, the author, gives such names to these communities?

## Book Two

Check the box of the prompt that you are responding to:

- ☐ As a narrator, Raphael stays oddly consistent: he endorses nearly every single practice of the Utopians—who utilize slavery as a form of punishment, exploit their less intelligent neighbors, and even euthanize their inefficient citizens. The more absurd the practice, the more we doubt Raphael as a narrator. So, as a narrator, is he unreliable, reliable, or a bit of both (perhaps depending on the topic or the ethical issue)? Choose one and make the case for it.
- ☐ Further complicating the issue, More was both a principled statesman as well as a committed Catholic. More dedicated his career to serving his country; at the same time, his commitment to his Catholic faith cost him his life. So, does the book seem more concerned with political systems or individual virtues?
- ☐ Given its differences from our own way of living, most of Utopia’s practices cause us to feel some level of conflict and discomfort with our own experience. But many of its practices prioritize virtuous conduct and seem designed to fulfill human potential while respecting the limits of human nature. Identify the best features of Utopia, and use them to defend its community as an ideal worth pursuing, even if it is a flawed one.

[illegible]

This image shows a full page of blank, lined paper. It features approximately 20 evenly spaced horizontal grey lines across its entire width, providing a template for handwriting practice or general note-taking. The margins are consistent on all sides.

# Summer 2025 Reading Assignment for a Rising 11th Grade Student

*1984* by George Orwell

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## Instructions

George Orwell explores the themes of language and thought, freedom, and human instinct in his novel *1984*. He causes his readers to wonder: How do we know when we live in a restrictive government? What would resistance look like if we found ourselves there? What do methods of repression and coercion reveal about human nature?

Compile a photography portfolio of four photographs taken by you over the course of your summer that represent some aspect of the dystopian world depicted in *1984*. Each photograph should be taken and stored digitally so that it is readily available to share via email with your teacher in the fall. Each photograph must meet the following criteria:

- ❖ Original - taken by you, not downloaded from the internet
- ❖ May be color or black/white
- ❖ Each photo represents a different aspect of the dystopia from the book

In this packet, for each picture: title the photograph, offer a brief description of the photograph, provide a caption of where and when the photo was taken, and write a substantial paragraph that explains how your photograph relates to the dystopia in the book. This paragraph may include some reflection on the topic, and you may reflect on similarities or differences between the photograph and the dystopia depicted by Orwell. Each paragraph must meet the following criteria:

- ❖ Draws upon quoted evidence from the text
- ❖ Clearly connects photograph to text
- ❖ Cites the text using proper MLA formatting
- ❖ Free of spelling/grammatical errors

Two different examples are provided for you.

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## Example #1: Surveillance at School

Photograph:  
(stored *digitally*)



Description: ceiling mounted surveillance camera

Location and date: Covenant Classical School, 5/7/25

Paragraph: In Winton's home as well as at Covenant, tiny cameras monitor the activities of those within view. Sometimes, these cameras go relatively unnoticed, as at Covenant. Other times, like in the case of Winston's telescreen, these cameras have an almost human presence and cause one to "live...in the assumption that every sound you made was overheard, and, except in darkness, every movement scrutinized" (3). Thankfully, at Covenant these cameras exist for the safety of those inside the building. However, it is not hard to imagine how, once the infrastructure has been installed, these cameras might be used to surveil the activities of delinquent teachers and students alike. Who knows what Ms. Reid is really doing down there in the front office...?



*Title*

*Stored digitally and ready to share via email to the teacher.*

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*Title*

*Stored digitally and ready to share via email to the teacher.*

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*Title*

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# Summer 2025 Reading Assignment for a Rising 12th Grade Student

*To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee & Selection of American Poems

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## Instructions

Read *To Kill a Mockingbird* (1960) by Harper Lee, as well as the selection of American poems listed below:

- ❖ “The Author to Her Book” by Anne Bradstreet
- ❖ “On Being Brought from Africa to America” by Phillis Wheatley
- ❖ “‘Hope’ is the thing with feathers” by Emily Dickinson
- ❖ “For You O Democracy” by Walt Whitman
- ❖ “Harlem” by Langston Hughes
- ❖ “This Is Just To Say” by William Carlos Williams

Choose three of the above poems and craft imitations inspired by characters from *To Kill a Mockingbird*. The form of each of your poems should imitate the syntax of the original as closely as possible. The content of each poem should be inspired by a character from the novel: it can be written about them or written from their perspective. So you will write a total of three poems, each about a different character from the novel, with each one imitating a different poem from those listed above. Additionally, each poem should include three footnotes which quote directly from the novel (with page numbers) and explain how that part of the poem relates to how the character is portrayed in the novel.

The six poems above are provided on the following pages, along with an example you may use as a model for what I am looking for you to do.

## The Author to Her Book

By Anne Bradstreet

Thou ill-form'd offspring of my feeble brain,  
Who after birth didst by my side remain,  
Till snatched from thence by friends, less wise than true,  
Who thee abroad, expos'd to publick view,  
Made thee in raggs, halting to th' press to trudge,  
Where errors were not lessened (all may judg).  
At thy return my blushing was not small,  
My rambling brat (in print) should mother call,  
I cast thee by as one unfit for light,  
Thy Visage was so irksome in my sight;  
Yet being mine own, at length affection would  
Thy blemishes amend, if so I could:  
I wash'd thy face, but more defects I saw,  
And rubbing off a spot, still made a flaw.  
I stretched thy joynts to make thee even feet,  
Yet still thou run'st more hobbling then is meet;  
In better dress to trim thee was my mind,  
But nought save home-spun Cloth, i' th' house I find.  
In this array 'mongst Vulgars mayst thou roam.  
In Criticks hands, beware thou dost not come;  
And take thy way where yet thou art not known,  
If for thy Father askt, say, thou hadst none:  
And for thy Mother, she alas is poor,  
Which caus'd her thus to send thee out of door.

## On Being Brought from Africa to America

By Phillis Wheatley

'Twas mercy brought me from my *Pagan* land,  
Taught my benighted soul to understand  
That there's a God, that there's a *Saviour* too:  
Once I redemption neither sought nor knew:  
Some view our sable race with scornful eye,  
"Their colour is a diabolic die."  
Remember, *Christians*, *Negros*, black as *Cain*,  
May be refin'd, and join th' angelic train.

“Hope” is the thing with feathers

By Emily Dickinson

“Hope” is the thing with feathers—

That perches in the soul—

And sings the tune without the words—

And never stops—at all—

And sweetest—in the Gale—is heard—

And sore must be the storm—

That could abash the little Bird

That kept so many warm—

I’ve heard it in the chilliest land—

And on the strangest Sea—

Yet—never—in Extremity,

It asked a crumb—of me.

## For You O Democracy

By Walt Whitman

Come, I will make the continent indissoluble,  
I will make the most splendid race the sun ever shone upon,  
I will make divine magnetic lands,  
    With the love of comrades,  
    With the life-long love of comrades.

I will plant companionship thick as trees along all the rivers of America, and along the shores of the  
    great lakes, and all over the prairies,  
I will make inseparable cities with their arms about each other's necks,  
    By the love of comrades,  
    By the manly love of comrades.

For you these from me, O Democracy, to serve you ma femme!  
For you, for you I am trilling these songs.

## Harlem

By Langston Hughes

What happens to a dream deferred?

Does it dry up  
Like a raisin in the sun?  
Or fester like a sore—  
And then run?  
Does it stink like rotten meat?  
Or crust and sugar over—  
Like a syrupy sweet?

Maybe it just sags  
Like a heavy load.

*Or does it explode?*

## This Is Just To Say

By William Carlos Williams

I have eaten  
the plums  
that were in  
the icebox

and which  
you were probably  
saving  
for breakfast

Forgive me  
they were delicious  
so sweet  
and so cold

## Example:

Original poem: “Harlem” by Langston Hughes

Character represented: Linda from *Brave New World*

Imitation:

What happens to a Beta un-bottled?<sup>1</sup>

Does she wither up  
like a tortilla on the grind?  
Or ferment like *mescal*—  
And then blind?<sup>2</sup>  
Does she shock with her saggy skin?<sup>3</sup>  
Or pinch and kiss—  
like a natural kin?<sup>4</sup>

Maybe she just floats  
like a *soma* holiday.<sup>5</sup>

*Or does she stay?*

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<sup>1</sup> “‘And that,’ put in the Director sententiously, ‘that is the secret of happiness and virtue—liking what you’ve *got* to do. All social conditioning aims at that: making people like their inescapable social destiny” (15). The Director introduces the reader to this brave new world by a detailed explanation of how the society, via growing babies in bottles, engineers everyone to be good at and content in what they are made to do. This poem explores the question of what happens to a Beta like Linda when she is outside of her “destined” place in society.

<sup>2</sup> These first two questions describe the life Linda has lived on the reservation, succumbing to age and wrinkles in the harsh New Mexican conditions, living off a simpler diet, and becoming addicted to alcohol (and its subsequent blinding hangovers) after losing access to *soma*.

<sup>3</sup> “Bloated, sagging, and among those firm youthful bodies, those undistorted faces, a strange and terrifying monster of middle-agedness, Linda advanced into the room” (152). This is Linda’s introduction to society, which dismays everyone unused to someone not perfected from and euthanized in a bottle.

<sup>4</sup> “‘I’m not your mother. I won’t be your mother.’ ... she slapped him on the cheek... Suddenly she put her arms round him and kissed him again and again” (128). This shows the tension Linda feels between acting as a good Beta should and actually caring for John as his mother. She is torn between who her conditioning has told her she should be and the life she is living on the reservation.

<sup>5</sup> “‘Every one belongs to every...’ Her voice suddenly died into an almost inaudible breathless croaking” (210). Once back in civilization, Linda stays high on *soma* to forget her years on the reservation. This is her one perceived alternative escape from the realities described in the lines above. Even her last moments of life are filled with hypnopaedic proverbs rather than reality.

Title of Original Poem: \_\_\_\_\_

Character represented: \_\_\_\_\_

Imitation Poem:

Footnotes:

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
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\_\_\_\_\_  
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2. \_\_\_\_\_  
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3. \_\_\_\_\_  
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Title of Original Poem: \_\_\_\_\_

Character represented: \_\_\_\_\_

Imitation Poem:

Footnotes:

4. \_\_\_\_\_  
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5. \_\_\_\_\_  
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6. \_\_\_\_\_  
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Title of Original Poem: \_\_\_\_\_

Character represented: \_\_\_\_\_

Imitation Poem:

Footnotes:

7. \_\_\_\_\_  
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