

## Incoming 11<sup>th</sup>-Grade Summer Reading & Writing Assignment

Over the summer, please read *Homegoing* by Yaa Gyasi. When we gather for class in September, the first unit of the year will cover the genre of the American short story. We will read a variety of diverse authors who - through their works of fiction - make wildly different statements about the United States. Yaa Gyasi is seen as one of the contemporary greats in this category, and her work *Homegoing* acts as a beautifully structured, impossibly creative and inventive collection of chapters that each act as a modern short stories that combine to tell a larger narrative.

For each Chapter (yes, you have to do this **multiple times**), I would like you to:

1. Think deeply about what you believe is Gyasi's purpose to this individual chapter. Then, write a one-sentence argument (thesis statement) where you identify what Gyasi is emphasizing about the human beings in her story?

*Example: In the short story "The Bad Graft," Karen Russell uses the spirit of a Joshua Tree to overshadow her human characters' actions, and to make a larger statement about how brief and fragile a human life can be.*

2. Identify any literary or rhetorical devices that you can find in each story. Here is a brief list:

|                    |           |                |           |
|--------------------|-----------|----------------|-----------|
| Ethos/Pathos/Logos | Diction   | Imagery        | Tone      |
| Symbolism          | Metaphor  | Simile         | Analogy   |
| Personification    | Hyperbole | Understatement | Euphemism |

3. For each chapter, write a one-paragraph argumentative piece where you answer the following question: "What rhetorical or literary strategies does Gyasi use to further the purpose of her story?" In other words, In 5-8 sentences, combine your answers from questions one and two, above. Please allow your opening sentence to act as your thesis statement, and use at least two quotes from the text to support your argument.

This assignment should be shared with Eliot Taft ([etaft@crms.org](mailto:etaft@crms.org)) by **Thursday, August 20<sup>th</sup> at 6pm**. I would recommend you spend 16 days on this - If you read one short story per day, and complete these writing details on the following day each time, you will be able to complete this in just over two weeks.