

English 10 Summer Reading Assignment

A Long Way Gone by Ishmael Beah [ISBN: 978-0-374-53126-3]

You will find English 10, a composition course, a little bit different from previous English classes you have taken. Throughout the course, we will examine the techniques that make for effective writing and use those techniques to make our own writing stronger. *A Long Way Gone* will serve as a lead-in to our unit on description and narration, so as you read, begin to question why authors make the choices they do: think about why Ishmael Beah told his story and what makes his story interesting to read; note his use of language and patterns of imagery; consider the structure of the book and why he chose to include some episodes and not others.

PART 1 – BACKGROUND – Context for Beah’s Story

Read the Chronology that begins on page 219. As you read the timeline, take note of the events that led to the political instability in Sierra Leone, as well as the specific causes of the conflict that arises in the 1990s.

PART 2 – ACTIVE READING

As you read, highlight and annotate the following motifs. In the margins, write the key word from the list to facilitate class discussion and to enable efficient recall when you return to school.

Motifs

Dreams or nightmares

Loneliness and belonging

Innocence and blame

References to time

Silence and speech

Images

Parents and children

Folk tales

Music and dancing

Nature

Destruction

Also, begin to question why authors make the choices they do and what makes a story interesting to read. Note passages that appeal to you as a reader, for example, description or narration that evokes an emotional reaction/connection and/or helped you connect to the story.

PART 3 – QUESTIONS

If you have questions as you read, write them directly in the text or use a post-it note affixed to the relevant page. These will serve as a starting point for our discussion in August.

NOTES:

- Consulting online guides (such as Wikipedia or Sparknotes) as a supplement to or a substitute for reading the book violates the Honor Code.
- You are required to have a clean, unannotated hard copy of all books required for this class; you may not use an already annotated used text or e-book.