

A.P. English Literature and Composition—Mrs. Hancock  
Summer Reading  
Notebook for *Regeneration* and *The Handmaid's Tale*

For each of these novels, I expect you to create a typed notebook in which you record your thoughts. These notes can be used on the gobbet test for each novel and obviously for the writing. Certain elements outlined below must be included in the notes on each novel. Aside from that, you may record anything you deem significant as you read and study the novels. Each novel's notes should include elements from the list below:

1. Characters: a list of characters and their traits.
2. Narrator: a consideration of who is telling the story.
3. Themes: major themes—echoes that reverberate throughout the work.
4. Symbols: key symbols, recurring symbols. Symbol is the image plus something more.
5. Scenes: scenes that are instrumental to moving the plot forward, scenes that foreshadow the action to come. (Be sure to record page numbers so that you can return to it when writing an essay or in class discussion)
6. Language: a list of dominant imagery—figurative language from metaphor, simile, and personification.
7. Tone: examples of irony (verbal/situational/dramatic) etc. Tone can be identified through DIDLS—diction, images, details, language, and sentence structure.
8. Quotes: significant quotations that illuminate key ideas, concepts or themes in the work overall. (Be sure to record page numbers so that you can return to it when writing an essay or in class discussion)
9. Questions that occur to you about the reading and its meaning. This is very important—always ask yourself why something is being done by the author—if the answer is simple, fine. If not, write it out and explain why the question is an important one to answer.

Finally, consider the fact that Pat Barker is writing a novel under the heading *Regeneration*. Margaret Atwood in *The Handmaid's Tale* is writing what Neil Gaimon might call cautionary fiction.

Are there echoes that you see coming up again and again in Barker's novel. What sort of narrator does she choose and why? Is there a theme that winds its way through the novel that Barker constructs?

And what does the cautionary fiction of "If this goes on...?" give to Margaret Atwood's novel. Atwood takes "an element of life today, something clear and obvious and normally something troubling, and asks what would happen if that thing, that one thing, became bigger, became all-pervasive, changed the way we thought and behaved."

The language that you use in your notebook can be informal, but it needs to be coherent. You will be graded on the depth and thoughtfulness of your notebook.

Typed responses are **strongly** recommended. You **may** hand-write your answers, but be prepared to transfer your writing to an electronic document for submission to Turnitin.com in August.