

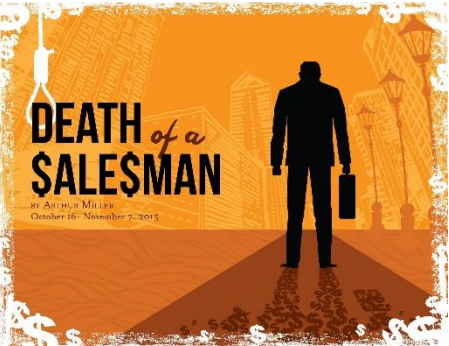


Healy 199

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE



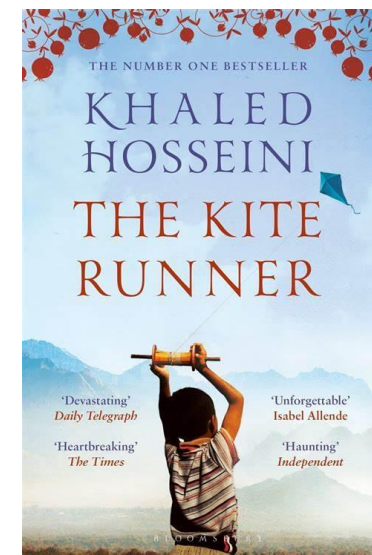
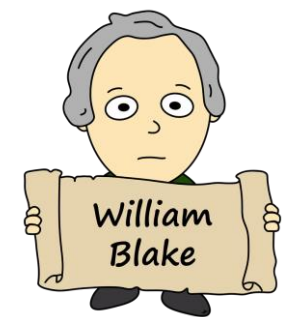
OTHELLO



Bridging the Gap Summer Work

A-level English Literature
AQA
Specification B

Name: _____



GCSE to English A-level Transition Booklet.

This booklet contains a minimum of 5 hours worth of work in preparation for your A-level English Literature course.

This work is divided into 4 parts:

- Introduction to Tragedy
- Work on *Othello*
- Introduction to Political and Social Protest
- Work on *The Kite Runner*

The tasks will prepare you for your first term of study at A-level. Ensure you complete all tasks so that you are well prepared when you begin in September.

TIPS:

Use a dictionary to look up any words you do not understand.

Use the internet to complete any research.



What is Tragedy?

Create your own evaluation:



Create a mind-map of all the events, plays, stories, films, songs, television programmes and computer games that you can think of that involve aspects of tragedy.

Look back at your mind-map.

1. What common features can you identify?
2. What makes the storylines particularly tragic?
3. What kind of tragedy appeal most to young people and why?
4. Why do you think people want to watch tragedy?
5. Why is tragedy important to humans?
6. What is the purpose of tragedy?

Life is a tragedy when seen in close-up, but a comedy in long-shot?

Chaplin



What does this mean? What can you interpret about Chaplin's view of tragedy?

How far do you agree?

Can you think of examples to support/challenge his views?

Key terms: melancholy/refute/demean

Produce your own extended evaluation of what tragedy is, utilising the examples you have been given and your own knowledge.

You can refer to the definition of others as quotations but you need to use your own words to define your own views.

The aim of tragedy, Aristotle writes, is to bring about a “catharsis” of the spectators – to arouse in them sensations of pity and fear, and to purge them of these emotions so that they leave the theatre feeling cleansed and uplifted, with a heightened understanding of the ways of gods and men. This catharsis is brought about by witnessing some disastrous and moving change in the fortunes of the drama’s protagonist (Aristotle recognised that the change might not be disastrous, but felt that this was the kind shown in the best tragedies – *Oedipus at Colonus*, for example, was considered a tragedy by the Greeks but does not have an unhappy ending).

How does this change, compliment or develop your initial ideas about tragedy?

Do you agree? Can you think of any examples?

1. Read through the following and highlight four words or sentences you don't understand and write an explanation.
2. Summarise the information below:

The tragedy became a popular type of drama starting with the ancient Greeks. In this era, tragic protagonists were not everyday people. Tragedies at the time had powerful and influential protagonists, with happy and fulfilling lives. During the course of Greek plays, the protagonists' lives are turned upside down and they suffer the deepest agony. This fall from a high status to the lowest is essential to the tragedy, since it makes the suffering all the more distressing. In addition, the protagonist usually has a tragic flaw, or some weakness that is the reason for his downfall. For an example, let's look at Sophocles' play Oedipus the King. In this drama, Oedipus is a great king and a strong leader. He is beloved by the people and lives a grand life. However, his tragic flaw is his pride. This tragic flaw led him to unknowingly murder his own father and marry his mother. This leads to Oedipus' downfall, in which he gouges out his own eyes.

Another characteristic of the literary tragedy is more obvious: a heart breaking ending. Some tragedies end in death, some in destruction and some in chaos, but whatever the situation, the protagonist almost always accepts responsibility for his mistakes as well as fights for a larger cause. Witnessing this greatness of character often leads to something called **catharsis**. Catharsis is known for possibly being the reason so many people want to read or watch a tragedy. Seeing a character suffer the worst and lose everything might leave most people hopeless. However, seeing the character take responsibility and retain his goodness through everything he suffers, often causes relief in audiences. This is a catharsis, which is the purging of emotions, specifically pity and fear. The audience feels compassion for the protagonist, and whatever the ending, is left with an affirmation of human values, which prevents feeling despair.

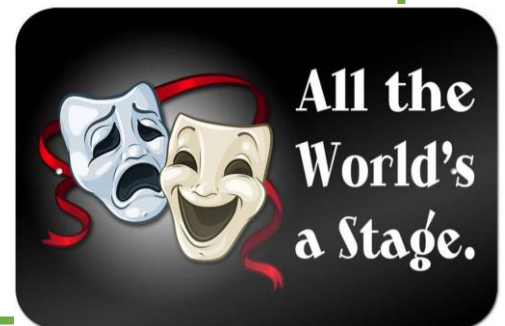
Hegel's theory of tragedy:

Next to Aristotle's account of tragedy, the theory of tragedy developed by the German philosopher G. W. F. Hegel (1770-1831) has become the most studied and quoted in the West. Tragedy arises, according to Hegel, when a hero courageously asserts substantial and just position, but in doing so simultaneously violates a contrary and likewise just position and so falls prey to a one-sidedness that is defined at one and the same time by greatness and by guilt.

Choose one of Hegel's observations and explain what it means, giving an example and evaluating its effect.

Read the article on Shakespearian comedy.

1. How did Shakespeare transform the conventions of tragedy?
2. What are the traits of Shakespeare's tragedy?
3. How does Shakespeare differ from Plato in his presentation of tragedy?
4. What influenced Shakespeare's tragedy?
5. Why was tragedy so crucial to Shakespeare?
6. Evaluate the effect of Shakespearean tragedy on his audience.



The dramatic form of classical tragedy derives from the tragic plays of ancient Athens, which depicted the downfall of a hero or famous character of Greek legend. The hero would struggle against overwhelming fate, and his defeat would be so noble that he wins the moral victory over the forces that destroy him. A tragedy evoked pity and terror in the audience; it was a catharsis, or washing clean of the soul, which left the spectator trembling but purified.

Aristotle proposed the tragic unities of Place, Time, and Action, that is, the whole tragedy would take place in a single location, for example a house or a city square (this included messengers who came in from elsewhere), it would happen during the course of one day (including speeches about events which had happened in the past), and it would be a single story, without sub-plots. Compared with these strict rules, Shakespeare's tragedy is a more relaxed genre, but Othello much more than, for example, the sprawling Hamlet, observes the spirit of Aristotle. Othello, apart from Act I in Venice, is located entirely within the fortress at Cyprus. Although logically the play covers an unspecified time lapse of, we presume, two or three weeks, it proceeds, more or less, by major scenes through the hours of the day, starting in Venice with the elopement after midnight, the Senate meeting at dawn, then at Cyprus with the morning storm and afternoon landings and developments, the fateful drinking party in the early evening and the murder at bed time. This is not to say that everything happens in the same day; it obviously cannot, but the impression is of an abstract day unfolding.

The plot is fairly unified, focusing on Othello and his fate, and dealing with other people and events only in so far as they are relevant to this focus. Othello is about as near as Shakespeare gets to classical tragedy.

The Tragic Flaw

C. Bradley saw Shakespearean tragedy characterized by the "tragic flaw," the internal imperfection in the hero that brings him down. His downfall becomes his own doing, and he is no longer, as in classical tragedy, the helpless victim of fate. Some say that Othello's tragic flaw was jealousy which flared at suspicion and rushed into action unchecked by calm common sense. A more modern interpretation would say that Othello's tragic flaw was that he had internalized, that is taken into himself, the prejudices of those who surrounded him. In his heart he had come to believe what they believed: that a black man is an unattractive creature, not quite human, unworthy of love. Thinking this, he could not believe that Desdemona could truly love him for himself. Her love must be a pretence, or a flawed and corrupted emotion. Iago hinted at these ideas, and Othello rushed to accept them, because they echoed his deepest fears and insecurities.

The Play's Structure

Shakespearean tragedy usually works on a five-part structure, corresponding to the five acts: Part One, the exposition, outlines the situation, introduces the main characters, and begins the action. Part Two, the development, continues the action and introduces complications. Part Three, the crisis (or climax), brings everything to a head. In this part, a change of direction occurs or understanding is precipitated. Part Four includes further developments leading inevitably to Part Five, in which the final crisis of action or revelation and resolution are explained. Othello follows this pattern.

Define the following:

Catharsis:

Hamartia:

Hubris:

Fate:

Catastrophe:

Recognition (anagnorisis):

Protagonist:

Antagonist:

Exposition:

Fatal error:

Pathos:

Empathy:

Nuntius:

Climax:

Fatal:

Chorus:

Juxtaposition:

Foreshadowing:

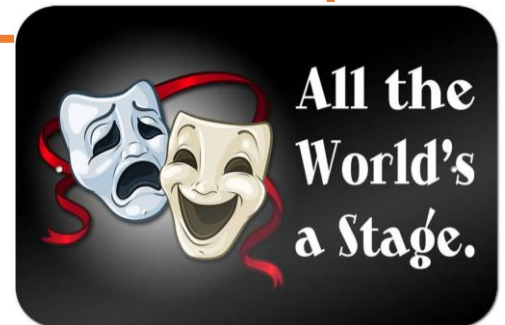
Tragic Evaluation

1. Shakespearean Tragedy
2. Green Tragedy
3. Modern Tragedy
4. Aristotle's Tragedy.

Choose an area of research and produce an evaluation on the next page.

You need to include:

- Historical background
- Illustrations
- Extracts from plays.
- Quotations from critics.



Tragic Evaluation

1.

Read this extract from “Othello” and label anything that could be considered tragic

In this extract, Brabantio has been told that his daughter has run off and married an older black man and feels betrayed

SCENE i: Venice. A street.

Enter, below, BRABANTIO, and SERVANTS with torches.

160 BRABANTIO. It is too true an evil: gone she is;
And what's to come of my despised time
Is nought but bitterness. Now, Roderigo,
Where didst thou see her? O unhappy girl!
With the Moor, say'st thou? Who would be a father!
165 How didst thou know 'twas she? O she deceives me
Past thought! What said she to you? Get more tapers:
Raise all my kindred. Are they married, think you?
RODERIGO. Truly, I think they are.
BRABANTIO. O heaven! How got she out? O treason
of the blood!

Constant questions— shows his confusion and tragic state of mind

2.

Key Questions: to consider

What is the significance of the torches?

Why is the night-time setting tragic? Consider at least two reasons

Why do you think Shakespeare chose to set this part of the play on a street? How does it link to tragedy?

Why do you think Shakespeare set the play in Venice, Italy?

Consider the context—why would all this be viewed as even more tragic in the 1600s?



Modern Translation

BRABANTIO

It's true. She's gone. The rest of my life will be nothing but bitterness. Now, Roderigo, where did you see her?—Oh, that miserable wretch!—You say you saw her with the Moor?—Oh, who would want to be a father?—How did you know it was her?—To think she tricked me so easily!—What did she say to you?—Get me more candles, and wake up all my relatives. Do you think they're married?

RODERIGO

Yes, I really think so.

BRABANTIO

Oh, heaven, how did she get out? My own flesh and blood rebels against me! Fathers, never trust your daughters just because they act obedient and innocent. Are there magic spells that can



Othello

You will start reading and studying ***Othello*** by William Shakespeare in September.

TASKS:

1. Buy a copy and read *Othello* by Shakespeare.
2. Watch a version of *Othello*. [\(82\) othello full play - YouTube](#)
3. Create a plot overview. You can be creative (poster, etc) or write/type your plot overview.
4. Create a character profile for the character of Othello. Attempt to link tragic terms.
5. Research the tragic elements of the play.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE



OTHELLO



Social and Political Protest: Summer Work

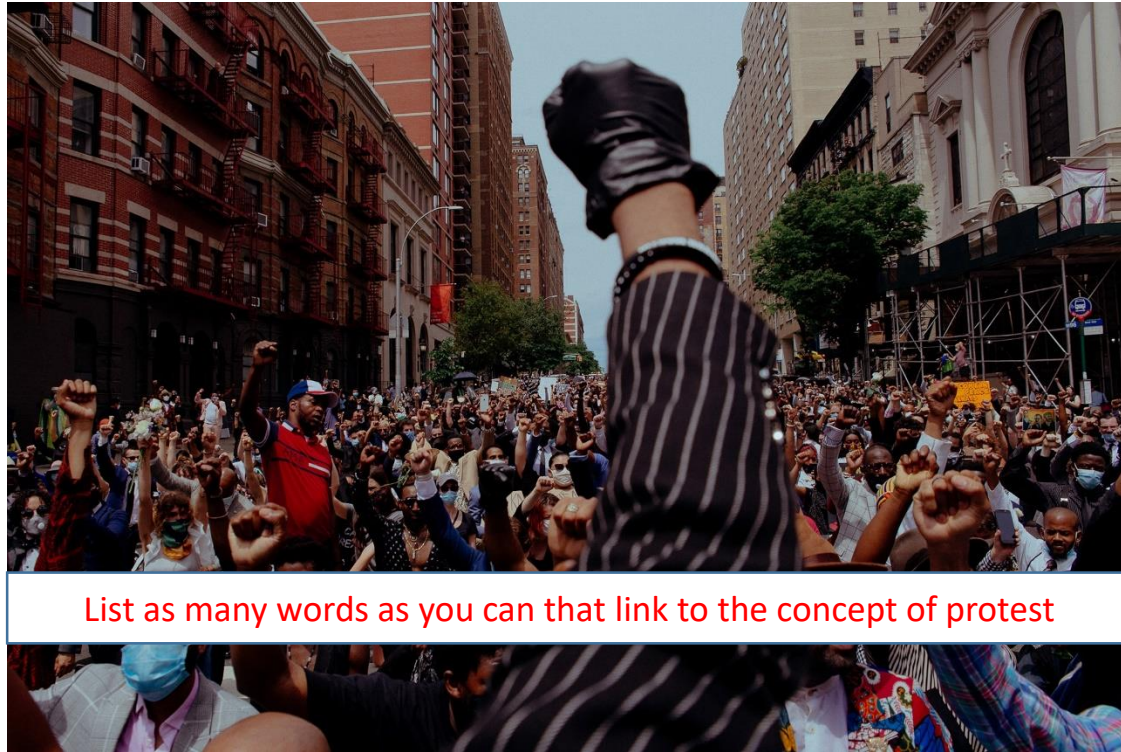


What is social and political protest?

Social protest is a form of political expression that seeks to bring about social or political change by influencing the knowledge, attitudes, and behaviours of the public or the policies of an organisation or institution.



Can you think of any modern examples of this?



List as many words as you can that link to the concept of protest



Social and Political Protest in Literature

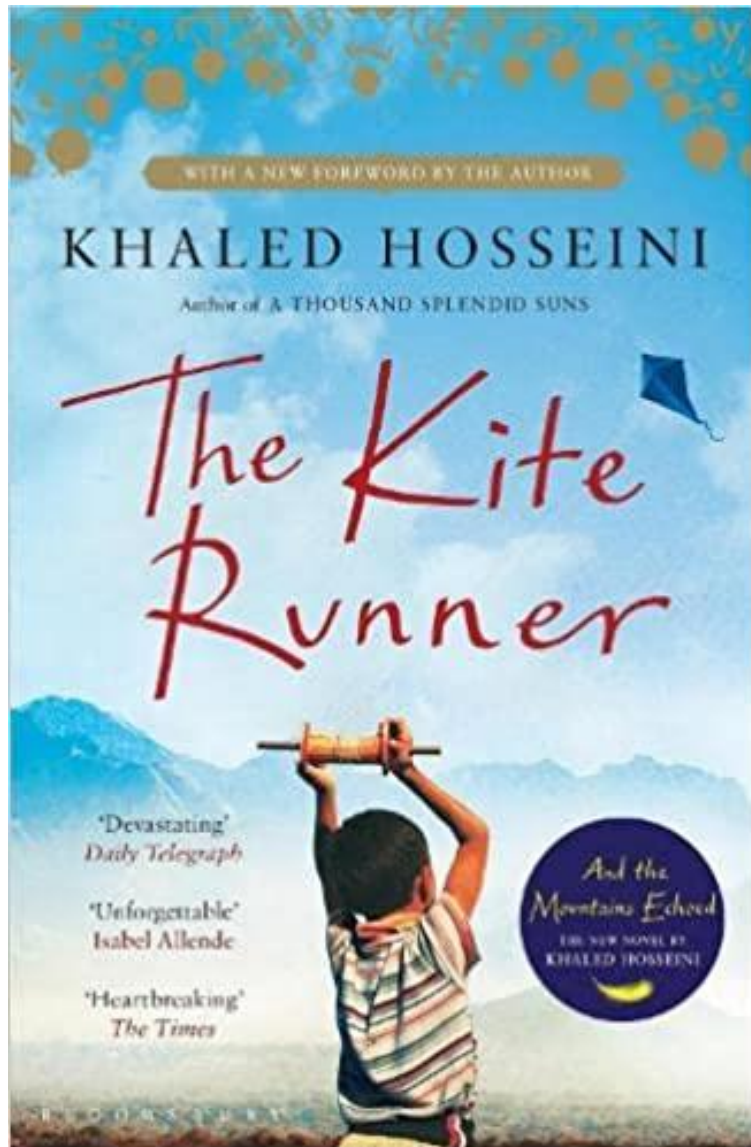


“All literature is protest. You can't name a single literary work that isn't protest”

To what extent do you agree with this concept?



The Kite Runner



Your summer tasks

Read The Kite Runner

Complete the booklet

Learn the context

Learn the key literary concepts and vocabulary

Reading Questions:

Why does this story jump between multiple timelines?

Why does the narrative shift between Afghanistan, Pakistan and America?

What kind of character is Rahim Khan? What do you think his role within the novel is?

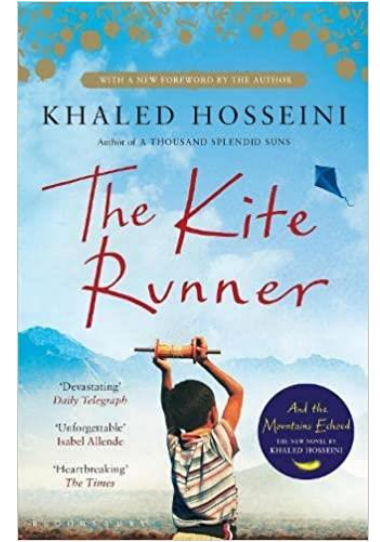
In your opinion, which is the most pivotal scene and why? Consider which scene links the most to the others.

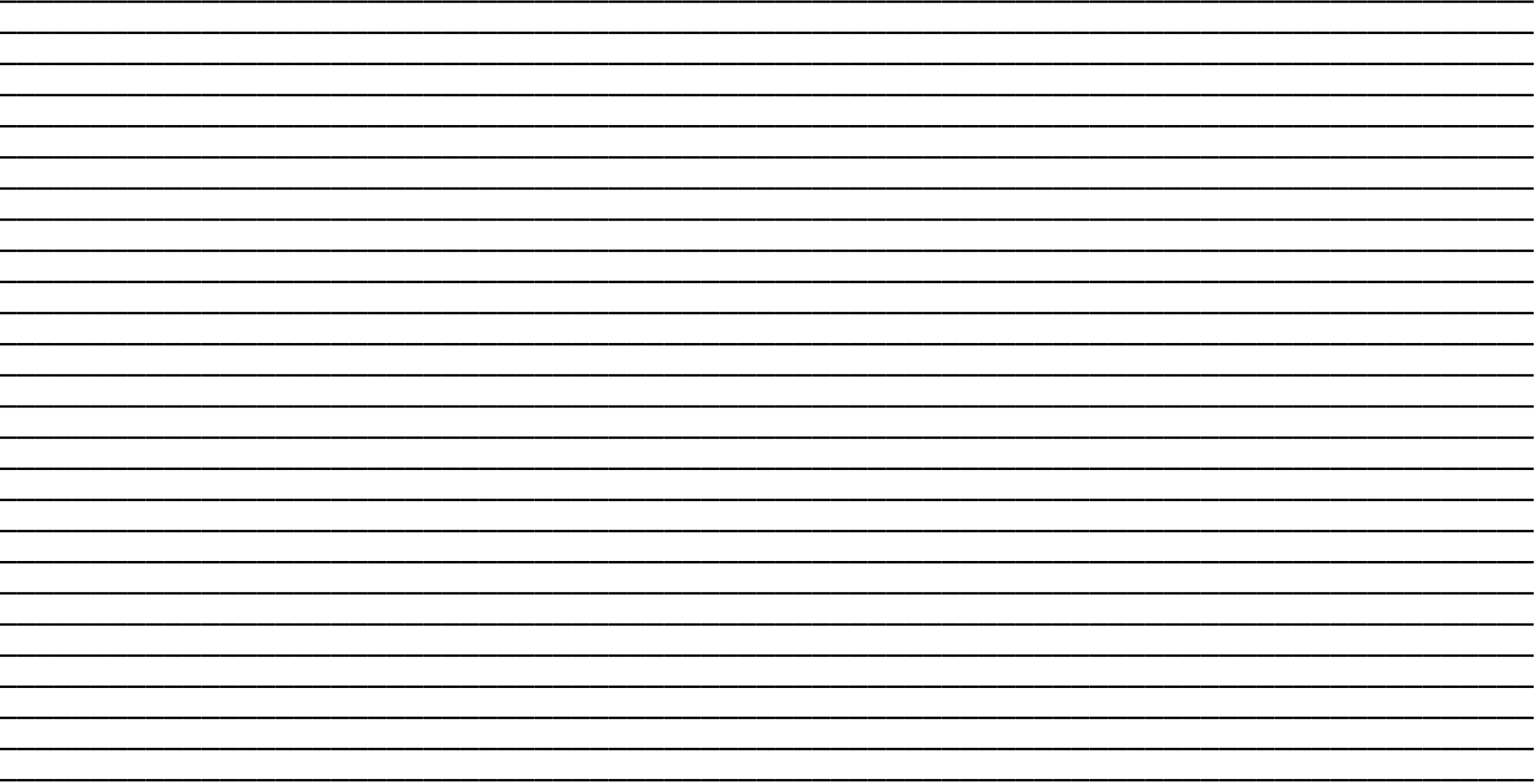
How does Hosseini present the Taliban in the novel?

How does the turmoil between Hassan and Amir mirror the tumultuous history of Afghanistan?

Does Amir ever truly redeem himself? Explain your reasoning.

Why do you think Hosseini wrote this book?





Narrative Structure and Chapter Development

Chapter	Summary of Chapter	Significance within the novel
Chapter 1		
Chapter 2-9		
Chapter 10		
Chapter 11 - 14		
15		
16		
17		
18-20		
21		
22-23		
24-25		

What are these structural devices and how are they used by Hosseini?

- Analepsis
- Prolepsis
- Spatial Shift
- Temporal Shift

Khaled Hosseini

Khaled Hosseini was born in Kabul, Afghanistan, in 1965. His father was a diplomat in the Afghan Foreign Ministry and his mother taught Farsi and history at a high school in Kabul. In 1976, the Foreign Ministry relocated the Hosseini family to Paris. They were ready to return to Kabul in 1980, but by then their homeland had witnessed a bloody communist coup and the invasion of the Soviet Army. The Hosseinis sought and were granted political asylum in the United States, and in September 1980 moved to San Jose, California. Hosseini graduated from high school in 1984 and enrolled at Santa Clara University, where he earned a bachelor's degree in biology in 1988. The following year he entered the University of California, San Diego, School of Medicine, where he earned a medical degree in 1993. In March 2001, while practicing medicine, Hosseini began writing his first novel, *The Kite Runner*, which was published by Riverhead Books in 2003. That debut went on to launch one of the biggest literary careers of our time. Today, Khaled Hosseini is one of the most recognized and bestselling authors in the world.



To what extent can Hosseini's own reality be said to be mirrored in the life of Amir in The Kite Runner?

Afghanistan



Afghanistan Historical Context – Research each one of these and comment upon how Hosseini presents this moment in the novel

1973: the Coup.

1978: the monarchy of King Nadar shah is eradicated. Afghanistan is controlled by the PDPA Communist).

1979 - 1989: Soviet Union take control (communist)

1996: the Taliban seize control.

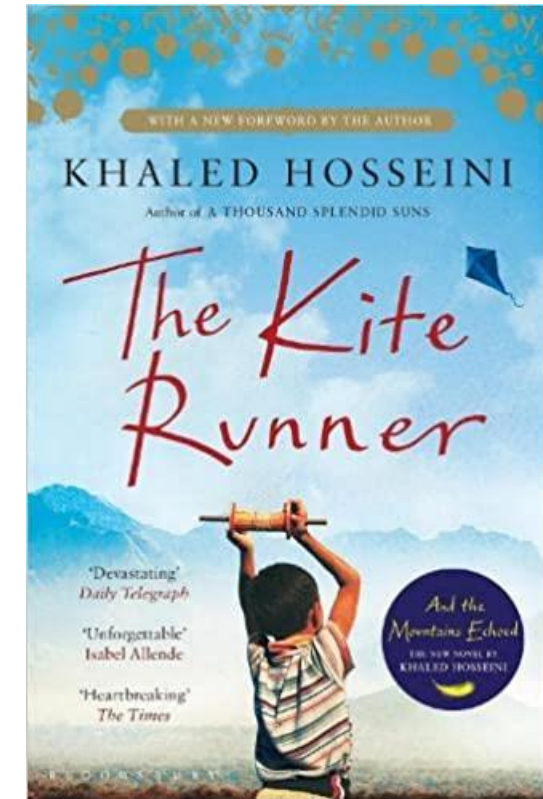
1998: the Mazar -I- Sharif Massacre

Explore the five
different historical
contexts that form
the novel.

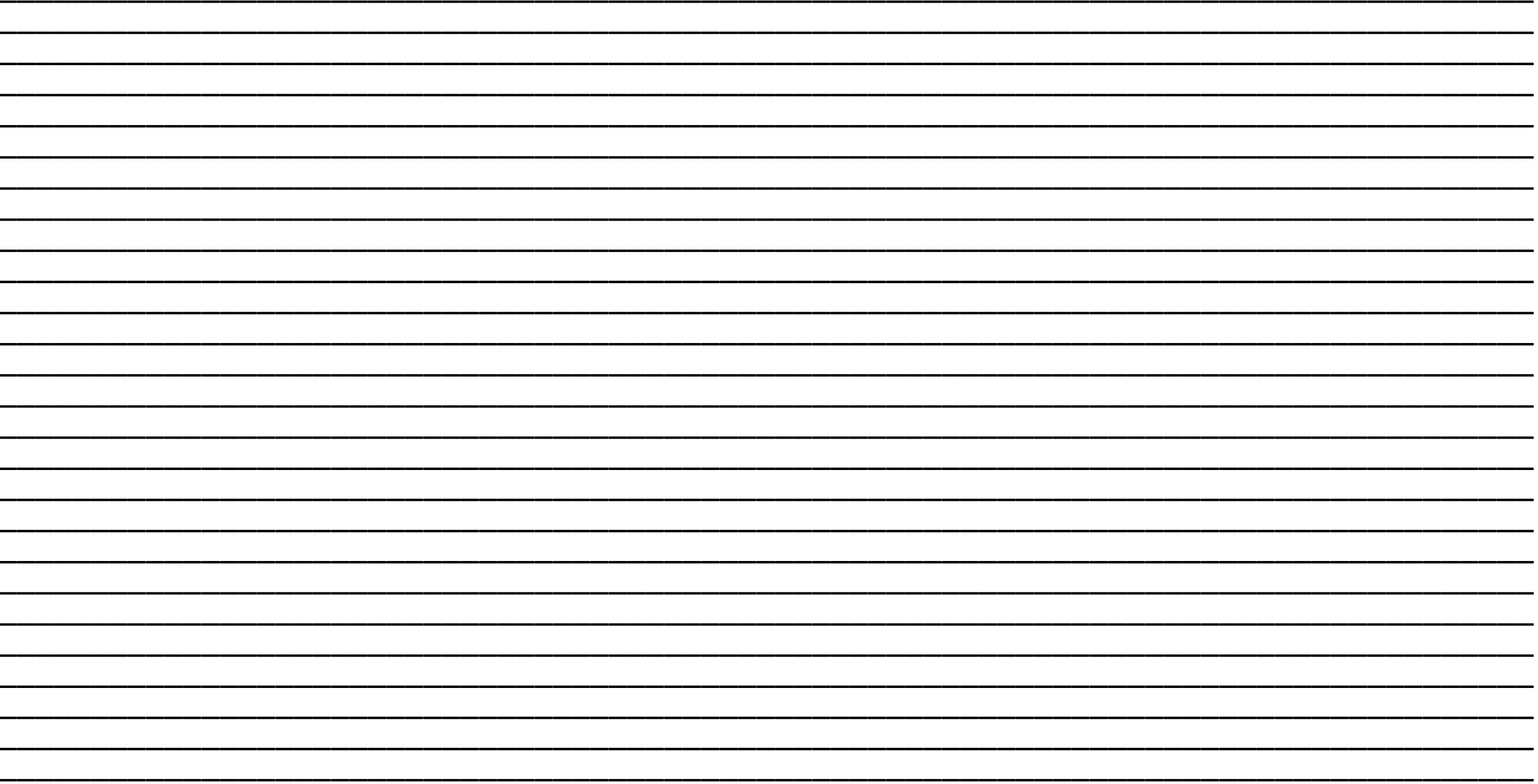


Key Concepts and Vocabulary

- Dominance
- Rebellion
- Powerlessness/Power
- Subjugation
- Conflict
- Oppression
- Resistance
- Religion
- Bildungsroman novel
- Propaganda
- Censorship
- Environmental degradation
- Tyrant
- Futile
- Omnipotent (un-stoppable)
- Omniscient
- Disenfranchised
- Antipathy (opposition)
- Political nuances (tones/shades)
- Ethnic hierarchy
- Subservient
- Redemption
- Societal stigma
- Rape/ Sexual abuse
- Devoid of expression
- Evokes/ Conjures/ Induces
- Androcentric society
- Internalised subjugation
- Sexual slavery
- Cultural desensitisation
- Stereotypical behaviours
- Ownership of children
- Overarching political problems
- Authority figures



Using the next page, either define these concepts or consider how they are presented in The Kite Runner.



Summer Reading

Make a list of your summer reading for pleasure below. Perhaps you are reading a novel, an autobiography, news articles, blogs, etc.

