

## AP Literature Summer Reading 2020

For your summer reading assignment, you are asked to read *The Chosen* by Chaim Potak. The novel was written in 1967 and focuses on the development of two protagonists, Reuven and Daniel. Both are young, Jewish boys growing up in New York in the 1940's who face the challenges of school, deciding what career to pursue, and how to maintain their family, their strong faith, and their own relationship with each other. The parallels in their lives highlight many themes that are universal to life and literature.

As part of your reading of the novel, you will be given a few (3-4) assignments on Canvas. Please sign-up for the Canvas course by emailing me at [brett.andrus@nebo.edu](mailto:brett.andrus@nebo.edu). I will then add you to the course. Please send this email **to join the course by June 20<sup>th</sup>**. By that date, I will have posted the first assignment (also included in this email) as well as tools to help with your reading. You are more than welcome to read and begin working before that, but please check in about that time to see updates and to have the opportunity to watch an instructional video.

You can check out a copy of the book from the Maple Mountain Media Center or your local library. You are also welcome to purchase the book if it's something you want to write in or keep. However, please note that **purchasing the book is not required**. Audio books are great options, but students usually understand classics better if they follow along with the written text while the audio book is being read.

I look forward to a great year working with you. Please enjoy your summer and your book!  
Sincerely,

Mr. Brett Andrus  
AP Literature  
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## Jewish Terms

**Yiddish** - a High German language written in Hebrew characters that is spoken by Jews and descendants of Jews of central and eastern European origin

**Hasidic / Hasidism** – an Orthodox spiritual revivalist movement that emerged in Eastern Europe in the 18th century. Followers of Hasidic Judaism (known as *Hasidim*, or “pious ones”) drew heavily on the Jewish mystical tradition in seeking a direct experience of God through ecstatic prayer and other rituals

**Shabbat** – The Jewish Sabbath (Friday at sunset to Saturday at sundown/appearance of stars)

**Yeshiva** – A school for Talmudic study; a Jewish day school providing secular and religion instruction

**Talmud** - The authoritative body of Jewish tradition comprising the Mishnah and Gemara

**Torah** - The body of wisdom and law contained in Jewish Scripture and other sacred literature and oral tradition; the five books of Moses constituting the Pentateuch

**Tzitzit** - the fringes or tassels worn on traditional or ceremonial garments by Jewish males as reminders of the commandments of Deuteronomy 22:12 and Numbers 15:37–41

**Apikorsim** - a Jew who is lax in observing Jewish law or who does not believe in Judaism

**Shamashim** - the sexton of a synagogue; the candle or taper used to light the other candles in a Hanukkah menorah

## Comparisons and Contrasts to Note

Authors often help develop their characters/stories through the use of comparisons and contrasts. Looking at the list of contrasts below, ask yourself, what is the author showing through the given contrast? Notice the similarities (comparisons) and the differences (contrasts).

- Reuven’s orthodox Jewish sect vs. Danny’s Hasidic sect
- Reuven (his personality, habits, study ability, ideas, goals, etc.) vs. Danny
- Reuven’s father’s style of parenting vs. Danny’s father’s parenting
- The way the two teams value/approach baseball
- Reuven’s injury vs. those of his fellow patients (on the right and left) in the hospital
  - Billy and Mr. Savo (notice what he tells Danny about his injury at the end of chapter 4)

## Other Questions to Consider in Chapters 1-4 (Part I)

1. According to Reuven, why are the boys of the Jewish schools playing baseball?
2. What is the lifestyle/focus of the Jewish students in Reuven's Brooklyn neighborhood?
  - a. How would you feel/do in this environment?
3. Why does Danny's sect look down on Reuven's sect and particularly his yeshiva?
  - a. Do you see any similarities in your life/the world today?
4. What major event happens while Reuven is in the hospital and why would it be a significant backdrop to the story?
  - a. Why is the baseball game described so heavily in line with the war?
5. Consider Mr. Galanter, his method of coaching, and his habits. Why is he most likely not fighting in the war and how does it affect him?
6. Consider Reuven's reactions to Danny's visits. How would you have responded?
7. Why is it so important for Danny's team to win the baseball games they play?
8. Consider the advice David Malter gives Reuven regarding choosing a friend.
9. Why does Reuven say he doesn't think Danny believes in God? What is Danny's dilemma?
10. Evaluate how you feel about David Malter helping Reuven in the library. Should he have done so? Why or why not?

## Part One Thematic Response

Directions: At this point, the beginnings of four major themes have been established. **Choose one of the following themes and complete the response according to the directions**

### Themes

- Blindness vs. seeing
- The importance of friendship / what true friendship is
- Silence (causes, purposes, reactions, etc.)
- People are not always what they seem

### Section One (Should be at least two full paragraphs)

- Choose **two specific textual passages from part one** in the reading and write about what they say in relation to the theme you have chosen. Ask yourself, "What do these passages seem to be suggesting?" "What do they say/demonstrate about one of the characters, another aspect of the book, or about the nature of humans, their relationships, or their understanding of the world"
- Cite the passages and properly integrate them in your writing
- Keep language formal (**NO personal pronouns** - "I" "me" or "we")
  - The passage shows . . .
  - This demonstrates . . .

### Section Two (Should be at least two full paragraphs)

- What do you personally connect with in regard to the theme you have chosen? How does it apply in your life? What does the book make you consider about your own relationships, beliefs, habits, understanding of the world, etc.?
- You may (and should) use personal pronouns in this section