

Summer Reading Assignment

Mr. Bracher – AP English Language/Ivy Tech-112/206/USI-101

General Directions: Read *Unbroken* by Laura Hillenbrand this summer. You may sign out a copy of the book from me or get your own copy. Please purchase a hardbound composition notebook to use now and for my class next year. You will keep a reading response journal. Stop after every **50 pages** of reading and write your responses. Later on you will need to type these entries for submission. Please bring your composition notebook and novel to class on the first day of school.

Journal Document Requirements – 8 entries

Please type in Size 12, Times New Roman

Each entry must be at least 3 paragraphs; however, the entries can be longer.

Each entry needs to be labeled with the page numbers it covers. Single space each entry and double-space between your entries.

Type the MLA heading on the first entry and make sure your name and page number are in the upper right-hand corner on each page.

Jones 1

Claire Jones
Mr. Bracher
AP English Language
12 July 2014

DO NOT SUMMARIZE! We already know what happens in the novel; instead, let me hear **your voice** and **thoughts** about the book. Begin each entry by describing your personal response to the reading selection. State your feelings, thoughts, reactions, and questions about situations, ideas, actions, characters, setting(s), symbols, plot, theme, and any other elements of the book. Write about what you like or dislike, or even what seems confusing or unusual to you. You can also write about specific quotes that are meaningful and add those to your entries. You may wish to write about why you feel these quotes are important.

August 1st Deadline - You will be expected to submit your completed document in to Turnitin.com no later than August 1st at 11 am. Log in to your Turnitin.com account. You will need to add the class: “AP Language Summer Assignment – Mr. Bracher.” The class ID is 18017965. The class password is castle. Enroll now to avoid problems later. Failure to submit the assignment on time will result in the student receiving a ZERO. Remember that turnitin.com uses the Eastern time zone.

SAMPLE JOURNAL ENTRY

Entry #1: Preface-Page 52

The front cover of *Unbroken* proclaims the novel to be one of “survival, resilience, and redemption,” and those words ring truer in the first fifty pages of the novel than I could have ever imagined. I am struck by the motif of Louie’s resilience and resourcefulness that manifest at an early age, from his childhood ploy to collect money with staged fights, to Sylvia’s comment that “[y]ou could beat him to death, . . . and he wouldn’t say ‘ouch’ or cry” (7, 9). Additionally, his boldness never ceases to surprise me, such as when he jumps out of a moving train (5). However, what I enjoy above all is how Laura Hillenbrand demonstrates the blossoming of these traits into an unbreakable determination. Hillenbrand’s assertion that during UCLA’s Southern California Cross Country meet, “[h]e felt as if he would faint . . . from the realization of what he was” is extremely striking because it depicts a young man who has found his passion, which will aid in fortifying his unfaltering will to triumph (19). This statement also resonates with me because I am at a point in my life where I am attempting to decide which profession I would like to pursue as an adult, but I am completely unsure of which fields to consider. I long to discover a profession that I can lose myself in, just as Louie loses himself in running (17).

Louie’s breathtaking resilience and dedication are most clearly on display in the passage detailing the 1938 NCAA Championships (43). I am utterly shocked and appalled at the maliciousness of his competitors as they cruelly injure him, even going so far as to crack one of his ribs (44). I find it challenging to believe that fellow competitors would not only be so brazen as to injure him but to even harm him in front of an entire crowd of spectators. The fact that Louie not only continues to run but also wins the race with a record-breaking time is astonishing to me (44-45). His perseverance in this race reminds me of Pete’s words from years before: “[a] lifetime of glory is worth a moment of pain” (35). These words, in turn, remind me of this statement by Muhammad Ali: “I hated every minute of training, but I said, ‘Don’t quit. Suffer now and live the rest of your life as a champion.’” These notions exemplify Louie’s spirit and strength and, I am sure, will become even more meaningful as the novel progresses and he faces greater pain than he ever expects. Resilience is in his blood.

Hillenbrand’s skillful writing keeps me in suspense during this passage, as Louie’s hunger to win is palpable. However, Hillenbrand’s writing style not only evokes great emotion, but her writing also provides an intriguing snapshot into world history during the 1930s and 1940s. Louie’s life seems even more surreal given its historical context. For example, his performance at the Berlin Olympics grabs Hitler’s attention and leads to a brief conversation with the leader (36). I find it ironic that just a few years later, he goes to war to fight the Axis powers, which include the Nazis. Also, Louie’s friendship with Jimmie adds to his unique place in history, since Jimmie is a spy for the Japanese (48). The information about Jimmie’s life also leads me to wonder about the extent of discrimination that most Japanese Americans faced before the United States formally declared war on Japan. Jimmie’s socializing with the elite of Washington, D.C. leads me to ponder this because it is in stark contrast compared to the internment of Japanese Americans that will take place approximately one year later (49). I am curious as to what life was like for the typical Japanese American pre-war. Additionally, I would like to learn how Louie’s views on human nature change after he is liberated. I predict that he will be a forgiving person despite all of the atrocities he endures.