

Summer Reading Assignment for IB Juniors: *The Thief and the Dogs* by Naguib Mahfouz

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Overview

Naguib Mahfouz's novel *The Thief and the Dogs* explores themes of betrayal, revenge, alienation, despair, and existential struggle in post-revolutionary Egypt.

Assignment:

1. **Read the novel:** Annotate the full text to prepare for discussions, quizzes and assignments in the fall. *No required minimum*, but thoroughness will prepare you for the test, writing assignments, and discussions. Expect a test on the August 13th/ 14th rotation.
2. **Complete four close reads**, focusing on a global issue and adding background research information for context and interpretation.
 - Choose **two global issues** and **two related research topics**: Two close reads for each global issue=4 close reads. Each extract is between 20-40 *continuous* lines. Each extract must be from a different chapter. 10+ annotations for each extract. Be prepared to discuss and share your close reads on the first day of school.

Global Issues (choose two)	
Loyalty and Betrayal	Lingering Effects of War
Justice and Revenge	Classism, Class Dynamics, or Inequality
Crime and Marginalization	Coping with Grief
Categorical vs. Nuanced Thinking	Self-Destructive Behavior
The Failures of Ideology	Moral and Ethical Decay
Gender Dynamics	Guilt and Redemption
Corruption of Power	Humanity and Dehumanization
Trauma, Alienation, and Isolation	Sources of Meaning: Politics, Family, Faith

Background Research Topics (choose two)
History of the 1952 Egyptian Revolution
Dogs in Muslim Cultures
Feminist Critical Theory, Egyptian Feminism
Existentialism, Sufism (mystical Islamic practice)
Marriage and Family in Egypt, Muslim societies
Principles of Islamic Ethics
The moon in the Islamic calendar
Barakah of sharing food in Islam

Key Authorial Choices to Consider and Annotate
Animal imagery (especially dogs) develops character , theme , and the significance of the title.
Setting : The Sheikh's House, Nur's Apartment, Rauf's House, Tarzan's Café, The Cemetery, Martyr's tomb, and Cairo help develop characterization , symbolism , mood , and theme .
Light and darkness imagery : details about the moon or its absence, personification of the night
Narration & Syntax : fragmented narrative, terse language, interior monologue, stream of consciousness, surrealism, time markers/confusion of time
Food and meal scenes : At Rauf's house, at Nur's apartment, and at the Café (characterization and symbolism)
Clothing : Pay attention to what the characters wear and how it helps <i>characterize</i> them.