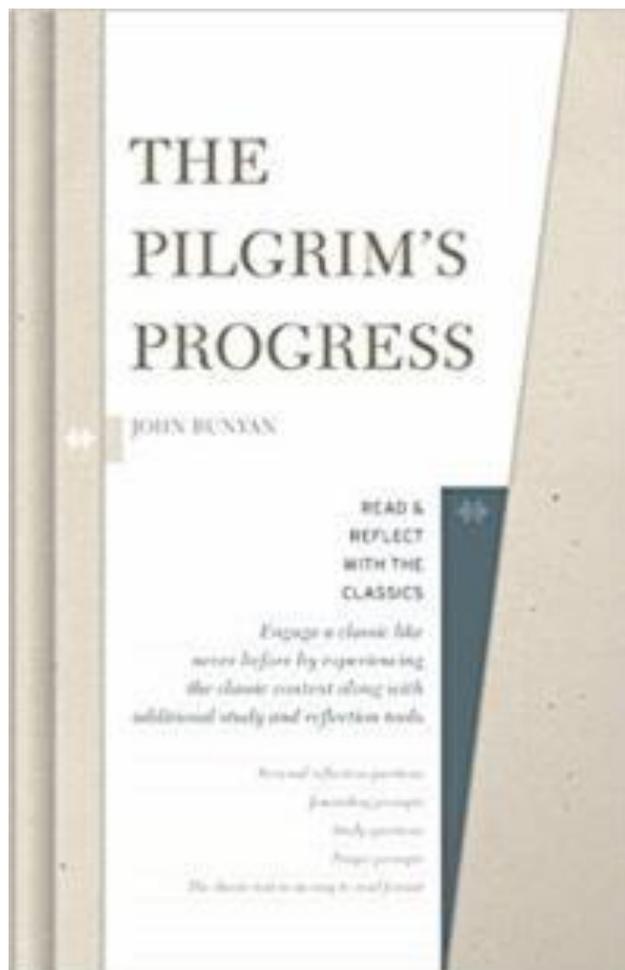


Literature and Composition 8 Summer Reading Assignment



Book: *The Pilgrim's Progress* by John Bunyan: Part 1

Purpose of assignment: The purpose is to develop comprehension and critical reading skills while analyzing a story and recognizing the allegorical significance of the characters and places during the journey.

The packet material and book content will be used as the basis for our first unit.

Grading: Packet questions will be assessed and graded. Upon our return to school, there will be an additional assessment that will count as a Major grade.

Introduction

The Pilgrim's Progress is the most famous allegory in English, and perhaps in any language. For nearly 300 years, if a home had any books at all, the family had a Bible and Bunyan's allegory. It has been continually in print since its first publication.

The term "allegory" refers to any work where the literal words merely represent their deeper, symbolic meanings. In other words, concrete and material images are used to represent more abstract ideas; thus, in *The Pilgrim's Progress*, Christian represents the Christian believer struggling through this world (the City of Destruction) as he journeys through this life and to his final home (the Celestial City).

John Bunyan wrote his allegory while in prison. Bunyan was imprisoned due to his refusal to obtain the required license to preach the gospel. During the seventeenth century, England had undergone several revolutions, both politically and religiously, and significant political changes, culminating in the Restoration of the monarchy in 1660. Bunyan belonged to a growing number of "dissenters." Even though they were not Catholics, the dissenters refused to participate with the Church of England. In order to control the dissenters, the state religion required all preachers to get a license if they wished to preach. Bunyan believed that his accepting a license from the state would make him a tool in the hands of the state and he refused the license because it violated the principle of the separation of church and state. He continued to preach to his congregation without the license and was later arrested. Most of *The Pilgrim's Progress* was written during this imprisonment.

Assignment

Read an **original, unabridged version** of *The Pilgrim's Progress: Part I*, which is Christian's journey, and answer the Study Guide questions below. We will **not** be reading Part II, about Christiana, his wife, and children's journey. The original work was written in 1678, in old-fashioned seventeenth-century English, but please do not let this turn you away. There is such richness and beauty in the words of this original version. If you are struggling to understand the material, read it slowly or even aloud. Your family may even delight in reading it together.

You may also listen to an audio version (MP3; audio CD; library audiobook) as you read. LibriVox is a free audiobook resource where volunteers read classic literature out loud, and several versions of *The Pilgrim's Progress* are available there: <https://librivox.org/>

Please **do not choose** an abridged, alternate, or children's version. These editions do not contain all aspects of the allegory.

I'm attaching a map of Christian's journey. Please print this out and follow Christian on his journey to the Celestial City, making note of what happens at each point and jotting down page numbers as you do so. It will be helpful for your reading to place the characters which Christian meets on the map where he encounters them. We will discuss this map on your return to school.

Directions for the Map and Study Guide Questions

Print off these questions and the Locations Map (final page)—feel free to enlarge the Map image onto 11x17 paper to make it easier to write on, if you like.

As you read, please note what specific things happen at each location on the “Locations Map” and include page numbers for each event.

Please complete these questions on notebook paper by the 2nd week of class. Include quotations and page numbers from your copy of the book as you respond to the questions.

1. How did you respond when Christian left his family?

Consider Luke 14: *If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters—yes, even his own life—he cannot be my disciple.*

2. What do you think Christian’s burden was?

Also, are many other characters in the book carrying burdens like the one Christian carries? Why or why not, do you think?

Job 21: 7-11 *Why do the wicked live on, growing old and increasing in power? They see their children established around them, their offspring before their eyes. Their homes are safe and free from fear; the rod of God is not upon them. Their bulls never fail to breed; their cows calve and do not miscarry. They send forth their children as a flock; their little ones dance about.*

3. Based on Bunyan’s descriptions, what do you think the Slough of Despond represents?

Psalms 69: 1-2: *Save me, O God, for the waters have come up to my neck. I sink in the miry depths, where there is no foothold. I have come into the deep waters; the floods engulf me.*

4. Mr. Worldly-Wiseman warns against the Evangelist and tells Christian to get rid of the Bible as it “should not” be read by the uneducated. What kind of person does he represent?

He points the way to the Village of Morality: what do you think that this village represents?

5. Christian is forced to pass between two lions. In Bunyan’s day, the lions may have represented governmental and religious tyranny, as Bunyan experienced during King Charles II’s reign. What do you think the lions could represent in today’s culture?

6. What or whom does Apollyon represent? Explain.

7. What kind of person is Talkative? Explain. His actions betray his heart.

8. John Bunyan coined the phrase “Vanity Fair” to characterize the worldly and materialistic lifestyle found in much of society. What are some of the most appealing or distracting aspects of Vanity Fair to you personally?

Give specific examples of how our world today is like Bunyan’s descriptions of Vanity Fair.

9. What causes Christian and Hopeful to leave the narrow path and enter By-path Meadow? (They hardly know they had done it until they find themselves in danger).

10. Did you notice how often Christian messes up? After all the battles he has won, it seems odd that he would again lose the path. Do Christian’s difficulties seem typical of a person’s walk with God? Explain, giving examples of ones that seem relatable and noteworthy.

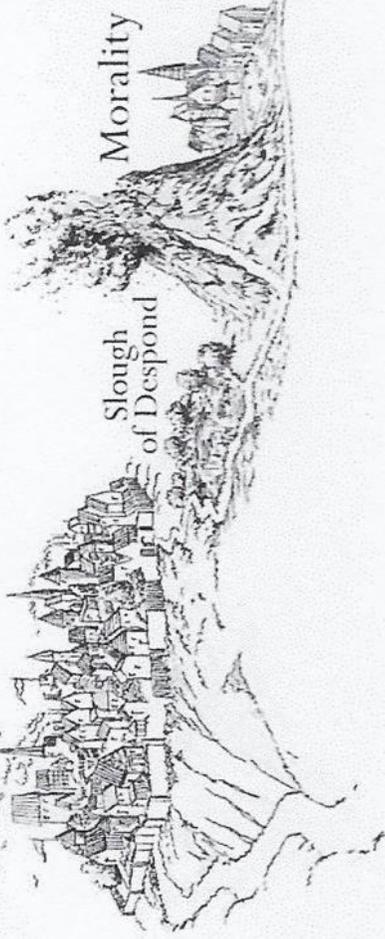
11. What is Doubting Castle? How do you think the two men end up in Doubting Castle when they have just eaten and rested?

12. Ignorance understands the Bible and acts like an involved and passionate Christian. He works hard and travels through difficulty until the end...and yet he isn’t saved. Why is that?

13. “The King then commanded that the gate be opened so that, as he declared, ‘The righteous nation that keeps the truth may enter in.’” Most people want to go to heaven –in fact, many unbelievers expect to go to heaven. And often people say, “I want to go to heaven someday - just not now.” Do you think that these people understand heaven properly? Explain your answer.

14. Why do you think Bunyan chooses to end Christian's journey with the damnation of Ignorance, a relatively minor character, rather than the arrival of Christian in the Celestial City?

City of Destruction



Morality

Beezebub's Fort

Interpreter's House

The Cross

Wicket Gate

Walls of Salvation

Palace Beautiful

Spring of Life

Hill Difficulty

Valley of Humiliation

Valley of the Shadow of Death

Vanity Fair

By-Path Meadow

Doubling Castle

Caution

Clear

Error

Delectable Mountains

By Way to Hell

Conceit

Enchanted Ground

Land of Beulah

The Celestial City