



Westminster Christian Academy

12th Grade Summer Reading

Advanced Expository Writing

[Unbroken: A World War II Story of Survival, Resilience, and Redemption](#)

by Laura Hillenbrand

ISBN-13: 978-0812974492

From the book jacket:

“In boyhood, Louis Zamperini was an incorrigible delinquent. As a teenager, he channeled his defiance into running, discovering a prodigious talent that carried him to the Berlin Olympics. But when World War II began, the athlete became an airman, embarking on a journey that led to a doomed flight on a May afternoon in 1943. When his Army Air Forces bomber crashed into the Pacific Ocean, against all odds, Zamperini survived, adrift on a floundering life raft. Ahead of starvation, enemy aircraft, and, beyond, a trial even greater. Driven to the limits of endurance, Zamperini would answer desperation with ingenuity; suffering with hope, resolve, and humor; brutality with rebellion. His fate, whether triumph or tragedy, would be suspended on the fraying wire of his will.”

Hillenbrand’s narrative has been made into a major motion picture. You are more than welcome to watch the film after you finish reading the book, but know that the film will do little to replace the content of the narrative, which is rich in historical detail and goes far beyond the time limits of the film. The film probably captures less than 20% of the book and leaves out some of the most important elements, so do not be tempted to skip the reading. It is worth your time.

Alternative Reading

If you have already read *Unbroken* for another class or for pleasure, you are welcome to reread it for more depth or read the following title instead:

[Endurance: Shackleton’s Incredible Voyage](#)

By Alfred Lansing

ISBN-13: 978-0465062881

Although the beginning of Lansing’s historical narrative is a bit slow, the story becomes a riveting adventure and tale of survival and leadership. Read more about the story on Amazon.

Your Reading Journal

In order to better comprehend the narrative and engage with the story, you will be required to keep a reading journal. In this typed journal, you will keep your thoughts about *Unbroken* (or *Endurance* if you meet the criteria) as

you progress throughout the book. Below you will find several prompts to respond to as you read the book that will help guide your thinking. You are to respond to a prompt after reading each of the five sections in the book.

This will be the first graded assignment in your Advanced Expository Writing class and will be an aid to you in your first formal paper.

Instructions

- There are five parts to the book. After reading each part, write a one-page response drawing from any one of the prompts on the next page. You are also welcome to create your own prompt.
- Date each response. There is no need for a title yet.
- Type and double space the entire entry in Time New Roman, 12 pt. font with 1 inch margins.
- Copy and paste the prompt/question you choose at the beginning of each entry.
- Fully develop your response with specific examples from the text in the form of summary and paraphrasing. Respond with your own original thinking to these passages.
- Cite the page number in parentheses after each summary/paraphrase or direct quote.
- You may write in the first person since this is meant to be a journal for you to record your thoughts.

Journal Grading Rubric

Exceptional (A)	Strong (B)	Satisfactory (C)	Superficial (D)	Unsatisfactory (F)
Responses are richly developed with personal reflection and multiple specific examples from the text. Responses display close and careful reading of the text. Accurate citation included.	Responses are developed with some specific references or details from the text. Some personal connections or reflections are made. Accurate citation included.	Responses are partially developed with some ideas not fully explained or supported with examples from the text. Some accurate citation included.	Responses are very general and lack specific examples from the text. Responses are underdeveloped.	Responses show little to no evidence of actual reading OR Responses are significantly underdeveloped.

Journal Prompts:

1. How are characters developing as the story progresses? How do you personally feel about them? Are some characters more dynamic than others (do they change during the story)? How have the experiences of some characters influenced or motivated the actions of other characters?
2. Can you relate to or make any connections to the individuals in this book? How have you been able to empathize with these characters?

3. Describe the major conflicts in the story and analyze how the main character(s) overcome them. Consider man vs. man, man vs. nature, man vs. self, man vs. God, etc.
4. After summarizing a scene from the book, describe the most interesting thing you've learned and how you might go about applying this idea to your own life.
5. What, in your opinion, is the overall theme or message of the story? How does the author develop this message or theme throughout the text? What are some scenes or events in the story that directly point to this message.
6. Evaluate the writing style of the author. What are the techniques that the author frequently makes use of and how effective are these techniques?
7. In what ways did the story challenge the way you think about your own life? What on earth does this great story of perseverance, loyalty, and suffering have to do with being a typical American teenager in 2019?
8. Write a letter to one of the characters in the book. Attempt to offer this character condolence or advice based on his/her current situation or conflict. You should include at least two specific events which this character is a part of during the story. You may also ask questions.
9. Choose one scene from the book that you think captures the entirety of the story. Summarize the scene and show how it captures the entire book in just a few moments/pages.
10. Draw from any one of the prompts on [Laura Hillenbrand's website](#) specific to the story (most of these questions apply best after you have finished reading the book).
11. Create your own prompt.