

**Name:**  
**Date:**  
**Period:**

## SUMMER READING ASSIGNMENT TO DO LIST

- \_\_\_\_\_ **PART 1: CLOSE READING OF SUPPLIED PAGE**  
 \_\_\_\_\_ **PART 2: CLOSE READING OF CHOSEN PAGE(S)**  
 \_\_\_\_\_ **PART 3: REVIEW QUESTIONS**

### ***Graphic Novel 101***



Performing a Close Reading of a page from *American Born Chinese* Step 1  
 First, look closely at the picture and take note of everything you see. Stop yourself from jumping to inferences (ex: the long shadows create a spooky mood); at this point, you're just observing (ex: long shadows). Take note of as much as you can, and label it all on the photocopy of the page your group is analyzing. Some of the things you label will turn out to be meaningful, some things won't. At this point, just

observe.

<b>Some things to look closely at:</b>	
Use of color	Emanata or sound effects
Use of light and shadow	Repetition (of colors, shapes, etc.)
Layout of the page (How many panels? Which panels are big? What shape are they? Do the panels have borders? Are there any splash panels?)	Uniqueness (if the artists does something differently on this page that makes it stand out from the rest of the pages)
Speech balloons & narrative blocks (How are they split up? Are they drawn in an usual way? Etc.)	Types of "camera angles" (close ups? Establishing shots? Long shots? Do some images "bleed"?)
Composition within panels (What's in the background, midground and foreground? Which parts of the panels have the most "graphic weight"?)	Facial expressions & body language of characters
Wording/writing techniques (in narrative blocks/captions, dialogue balloons, and/or speech bubbles)	Transition types (Do the panels depict play by play action, or are they a series of different angles from the same moment in time, or are they "slow motion" transitions, capturing a second by second action panel by panel, etc.)

**Step 2** Added together, all of those elements you noted in Step 1 have a cumulative effect. Consider what effect they have (Yang drew...to emphasize..., etc), and write a paragraph of analysis on back of this sheet.

<b>Some "big picture" questions your analysis may address:</b>	
What tone is created? How?	What is revealed or emphasized about the characters?
Could any objects on the page act as symbols? What could they symbolize?	Do any of the elements establish or emphasize something important about the setting?
What bigger theme(s) of the novel are developed on this page? How?	



In addition to using drawing techniques, graphic novels use many of the same techniques and contain the same elements as traditional novels. Consider the following traditional literary elements on the front of this page.

### Part I: Close Reading of Supplied Page

**Directions:** Using complete sentence(s), answer questions 1-5 involving a close-reading of the page above.

1. What is revealed about each character's personality on this page? (Characterization)
2. What writing &/or drawing techniques does Yang use to emphasize those traits? (Characterization)
3. Which details/techniques does Yang use to establish the setting? (Setting)
4. How is the object Jin is holding in his hands

symbolic? (Symbolism)

5. One theme Yang explores in this book is the way 1<sup>st</sup> generation Americans can feel lost between two cultures. How is this theme depicted on this page? (Theme)

### Part 2: Close Reading of Chosen Page(s)

**Directions:** Answer questions 1-3 using the graphic novel *American Born Chinese*.

1. Pick a page that you feel reveals something about a character. Write a paragraph that explains your characterization.
  - ✗ In the first sentence of the paragraph, identify the title (italicized), author, the character(s) involved, and the situation.
  - ✗ In sentences 2, 3, and 4; using some of the story-telling concepts listed in the graph such as color and camera angles; list three details that reveals a trait of the character.
  - ✗ In the last sentence, identify what is being said about the character.
    - “Yang drew this page to reveal ...” or “Yang drew this page to emphasize ...”
2. Pick a page that shows a conflict between characters or within a character. Write a paragraph that explains this conflict.
  - ✗ In the first sentence of the paragraph, identify the title (italicized), author, the character(s) involved, and the situation.

- ✘ In sentences 2, 3, and 4; using some of the story-telling concepts listed in the graph such as color and camera angles; list three details that seem to reveal the conflict.
  - ✘ In the last sentence, identify what the conflict is.
    - “Yang drew this page to reveal ...” or “Yang drew this page to emphasize ...”
3. Pick a page that shows a theme depicted in the graphic novel. Write a paragraph that explains this theme.
- ✘ In the first sentence identify the title (italicized) and author and briefly identify which page you have chosen.
  - ✘ In the next three sentences, using some of the concepts such as color and camera angles listed in the graph, list three details that seem to suggest one common message from the author.
  - ✘ In the last sentence, identify what that message or theme is

Part 3: Review Questions

**Directions:** Using complete sentence(s), answer the following questions as you read *American Born Chinese*.

Pages 1-40

1. How was the Monkey King born?
2. What are the four major heavenly disciplines?
3. What did the Monkey King do once he was thrown out of the party?
4. What do you think the herbalist meant? How do you have to forfeit your soul to become something?
5. Why do you think Jin is having trouble fitting in at school?

Pages 43-84

1. What are the four major disciplines of invulnerability?
2. What are the four major disciplines of bodily form?
3. How did the Monkey King convince the other deities that he was equal to Heaven?
4. Why was the Monkey King punished? What was his punishment?
5. How is the Monkey King prideful?

Pages 87-106

1. How do you think Jin feels about Greg? Why?
2. Why do you think Jin changes his hair?

Pages 109-160

1. Why has Danny transferred to and from so many schools?
2. How does Lai-Tsao convince the Monkey King to help him?
  - 2a. What moral is taught here?

Pages 163-233

1. Who actually was Chin-Kee?

2. Who actually was Wei-Chen?
3. Explain how the Monkey King, Danny, Jin, and Wei-Chen were all connected.
4. What did Jin need to learn about assimilation and being an immigrant?
5. What character in the novel reminds you of a similar character in a book, movie, or TV show? Briefly explain the similarity.
6. What character did you find most interesting? Briefly explain.
7. Did you enjoy this novel? Why or why not?