

GUIDELINES FOR INTRODUCING

The Kite Runner

by Khaled Hosseini

OVERVIEW: Published two years after 9/11, *The Kite Runner* became a huge, international best-selling novel, which offered a unique and rare view of a country and people most Americans knew nothing about. As the war in Afghanistan continues to dominate American thinking and intensifies both on the ground there and in the minds of the American people, a close reading of this text can offer insights into the country, the people, and what is at stake there. The novel, almost inadvertently yet inevitably, has become a mirror into and of what Afghanistan is to its own people and to the people of America.

STUDENT LEVEL:

Because of several very brutal scenes, this novel should be read only with junior or seniors in high school. Even they should be warned that these scenes will be uncomfortable and off-putting, yet they are crucial to the novel's plot lines and its themes.

DEPARTMENTS:

With slight alterations in emphasis, this novel can be taught in:

- a. English
- b. World History/Geography
- c. Contemporary affairs/events

OBJECTIVES:

1. To read and understand a contemporary, literary novel.
2. To understand the political, ethnic, class, and historical complexity of modern Afghanistan.

3. To debate and understand America's current role in Afghanistan.
4. To debate and understand the ambiguity of the meanings of redemption, goodness, and happiness.