

Gifted English 10: World Literature and Composition

The Tao of Pooh reader response assignment

I. Assignment for “The How of Pooh?”

This chapter uses the image of the allegorical scroll *The Vinegar Tasters* to convey the difference between the three teachings of China: Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism. To show your understanding of this chapter, describe a situation that you have experienced. Then, explain three ways in which you could have responded to this experience—each response corresponding to one of these spiritual views.

II. Assignment for the seven chapters listed below

For each of the chapters listed below, complete one of the following analysis options:

- A. Each chapter explores a different aspect of Taoism. In a concise paragraph, describe the central philosophy of the chapter, and then provide a specific personal example of that concept in your own life.
- B. Summarize the main idea of the chapter in three or fewer sentences. Then, write a *haiku* (a poem of three lines of five, seven, and five syllables) that expresses that central idea.
- C. *The Tao of Pooh* relies on food references: the central idea of the initial chapter is conveyed through an allegory about vinegar, and of course, Pooh is constantly talking about honey. Write a recipe that illustrates the way one should live life as expressed in the chapter, and then, in a concise paragraph, explain how the recipe reflects the central philosophy of the chapter.
- D. The first chapter, “The How of Pooh?,” introduces the three teachings of China through art—the allegorical scroll, *The Vinegar Tasters*. Follow Hoff’s model by selecting a work of art (painting, song, film) that accurately represents the central idea portrayed in the chapter. Explain how the work represents the philosophical concept of Taoism.

Chapter Titles

“The Tao of *Who*?”

“Spelling Tuesday”

“Cottleston Pie”

“The Pooh Way”

“Bisy Backson”

“*That* Sort of Bear”

“Nowhere and Nothing”

Sample Haiku

I toss the pebble

Ripples distort the surface

Flowing back to self

III. Assignment for the “The Now of Pooh”

Hoff asserts that we should choose the way of Pooh rather than the ways of Owl, Rabbit, or Eeyore. After reading *The Tao of Pooh*, describe aspects of your life that reflect the ways of Owl, Rabbit, and Eeyore. Then, explain your Pooh-like ways. Assert whether you agree with Hoff’s belief that the way of Pooh is a superior life philosophy.