

THIS IS AN OPTIONAL ASSIGNMENT. IT WILL HELP YOU WITH YOUR SUMMER READING TEST WHICH WILL BE THE FIRST WEEK OF SCHOOL.

Honors English 9

*The Good Earth*  
Summer Reading Guide

Name:

Read the entire book by the first day of school. The questions follow sequential order of the book.

1. Briefly describe the setting of the novel.
2. As the novel begins, what important day is it?
3. What was O-lan's occupation before her marriage to Wang Lung?
4. In one succinct sentence, describe the role of women in China at this time.
5. Describe O-lan's plans to return to the House of Hwang.
6. What major purchase does Wang Lung make from the Old Mistress?
7. What is filial piety?
8. Why is Wang Lung forced to lend money to his uncle?
9. What is the attitude of the Chinese toward the birth of a daughter?
10. What tragedy befalls Wang Lung after lending money to his uncle and the birth of his daughter?
11. Despite the situation, Wang Lung uses his remaining money to buy more land. Why?
12. What is the Catholic Church's stance on infanticide?
13. What is the practice of foot binding? Search and find a picture of this. Is this still occurring today?
14. What is the policy of having children in China today? Does China have a population control law?
15. Why is it so important to have a male child in China?

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These questions should be completed as class completes the novel after school begins.

16. What gender was Wang Lung's fourth child and what happened to it?
17. How do Wang Lung and his family get enough money to take the train south?
18. In the south, how do Wang Lung and his family support themselves?
19. When there is no work or poor kitchens for food, what idea enters Wang Lung's mind briefly to get money?
20. What enables Wang Lung and his family to return to their land?
21. What does O-lan wish to keep for herself?
22. What is odd about the girl child?
23. Whom does Wang Lung hire as a steward for his new lands?
24. Why does Wang Lung send his two sons to school?
25. What happens when O-lan gives birth a 5<sup>th</sup> time?
26. What happens that gives Wang Lung idle time?
27. How does Wang Lung's attitude toward O-lan change?

28. Where does Wang Lung spend most of his idle time?
29. What young woman does Wang Lung desire for himself?
30. What special gift does Wang Lung give his new love?
31. What does Wang Lung decide to do with his eldest son because of his moodiness and restlessness?
32. Why does Wang Lung angrily send him to the South?
33. What does Wang Lung do with his second son?
34. Why does Wang Lung allow his uncle and his family to do as they please in his house?
35. It seems as if O-lan waits until what event happens before she dies?
36. Who else dies in Wang Lung's family?
37. How does Wang Lung and his son plan to "handle" the uncle and his family?
38. As Wang Lung's household problems increase, he finds comfort in several things. What are they?
39. What occupations does Wang Lung decide on for his three sons?
40. What two disasters affect Wang Lung's land?
41. What major move does Wang Lung make?
42. What gender was Wang Lung's first grandchild?
43. What differences does Wang Lung note about the birth of this child and his own children?
44. What changes does Wang Lung make in the management of his land?
45. Why is Wang Lung's 3<sup>rd</sup> son a problem to him?
46. Who becomes Wang Lung's 3<sup>rd</sup> woman?
47. What important job does he entrust to her?
48. What happens to the 3<sup>rd</sup> son?
49. At the end of the novel, it is clear that Wang Lung's sons will do what?
50. Succinctly, describe Wang Lung's last days.
51. What is the Catholic Church's view of polygamy?
52. Explain how the title, *The Good Earth* is appropriate for the story?
53. Is Wang Lung a good father? Justify your reasoning.
54. Is Wang Lung a good husband? Justify your reasoning.