

# Honors English 1 Summer Reading Assignment

English Teacher: Miss Shannon Olsen

Hello Honors English Freshman!

This summer, you will be tackling **two** texts that reflect historical events from the 1960s in Cuba. Both of these historical fiction novels show the struggles and life of young families during a pivotal point in history, while providing differing experiences throughout the reign of Castro in Cuba.

## **Book 1: *The Red Umbrella* by Christina Diaz Gonzalez \*\*This will be the book used for Freshman Orientation**

- This book follows fourteen-year old Lucia and her journey from Cuba to America as part of Operation Pedro Pan—an organized exodus of more than 14,000 unaccompanied children, whose parents sent them away to escape Fidel Castro's revolution. When her parents make the decision to send her and her brother to the United States, they are sent to Nebraska and now have to adapt to a new lifestyle, language, and culture. Will she ever see her parents again? Will she ever get to go home again?

## **Book 2: *My Brigadista Year* by Katherine Patterson**

- This book follows thirteen-year old Lora, a girl who decides that she wants to join Premier Castro's "army" of young literacy teachers, even though her parents are very against this. She is confused as to why her parents don't want her to use her gifts and talents to help those in need. It traces a young teen's coming-of-age journey from a sheltered life to a singular mission: teaching fellow Cubans of all ages to read and write, while helping with the work of their daily lives and sharing the dangers posed by counterrevolutionaries hiding in the hills nearby. Inspired by true accounts, the novel includes an author's note and a timeline of Cuban history.







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## English Summer Assignment

**Directions:** Complete Part 1 and Part 2 below. **You must bring your completed *The Red Umbrella* and *My Brigadista Year* Annotations (Part 1) & Choice Board Portfolio (Part 2) to Orientation Day in August so that you can participate in your English activities that day. You will submit this assignment for grading during your first English class at John Carroll.**

1. While you read *The Red Umbrella* and *My Brigadista Year*, **annotate the text**. Here is a simple guide to annotations called the Read - Pause - Reflect method:
  - a. **Read a section of the text.** This could be one or multiple chapters, or perhaps a few pages within a chapter.
  - b. **Pause when desired.** This could be at the end of your reading session, or at a particular spot in the text where it makes sense to pause.
  - c. **Where you paused, mark the text.** Your book should be fully annotated throughout, showing that you have not only read but interacted with the texts that you are reading. **For guidance, please use the annotation key below:**

### Annotation Categories & Suggested Key

	<b>Important Characters &amp; Relationships Between Them-</b> Who are the major characters? What are the relationships between the major characters?
	<b>Major Plot Events &amp; Tension-</b> what are the most important events that have happened in the story. Is there tension occurring during these events?
	<b>Themes and Big Ideas-</b> As you read, what are the messages that you are seeing in the story?
	<b>Questions you Have About the Text-</b> What question do you have about the text? Any confusion, wonderings about the future, questions for the characters themselves, etc.
	<b>Interesting Descriptions of People and Places-</b> How does the author describe the setting and characters? What image pops in your head when you read about that character or that place?
	<b>Significant Quotes-</b> Are there any quotes that pop out to you?

2. After you read *The Red Umbrella* and *My Brigadista Year* ,**complete a portfolio** of three Choice Board activities from the Board on the next page. Your portfolio should showcase your understanding of the both novels' key characters, plot events, themes, point of view, and style choices. You must choose one activity from each of the following depth & complexity tiers:

**Tier 1:** Activities focus on the characters and their journeys throughout the novel. Choose an activity that will help you best showcase this character and their journey.

**Tier 2:** Activities focus on the plot and Point of View (POV). Choose an activity that will help you best showcase your understanding of the story and all its moving parts.

**Tier 3/4:** Pushes you to think more critically about the story, the characters, and analyze more complex pieces of the story. Select the writing opportunity that will best help you analyze the novel on a deeper level.

**\*\*Note:** All Honors students are **required** to do the Tier 4 assignment- Literary Criticism. If you would also like to complete one of the Tier 3 assignments, in lieu of completing either a Tier 1 or Tier 2, you may. However, you still need to have 3 completed activities, and you may choose which book you will pair with each Tier.

#### Options:

1. Tier 4, Tier 2, Tier 1
2. Tier 4, Tier 3, Tier 2
3. Tier 4, Tier 3, Tier 1

TIER ONE		
<p><b>CHARACTER ANALYSIS</b></p> <p>Choose a character from the text and analyze their personality, motivations, and actions. Write 2 paragraphs of 5-8 sentences each about what you know about the character, how the author conveyed this characterization to you, and how the character contributes to the story's overall themes.</p>	<p><b>MAKE A BOARD GAME</b></p> <p>Create a board game based on the text. Include different events and characters from the story and create rules for how to play. Write a paragraph of 5-8 sentences that explain how the design and rules were influenced by the story's conflicts and themes.</p>	<p><b>WRITE A DIARY ENTRY</b></p> <p>Imagine you are Lora or Lucia and write a diary entry of 10-16 sentences reflecting on your experiences throughout the course of the story. Include your thoughts and feelings about the people you met and the challenges you faced, showing a deep understanding of Lora/Lucia's journey.</p>
TIER TWO		
<p><b>CREATE A SOUNDTRACK</b></p> <p>Choose 10 scenes from the text and create a soundtrack that captures the emotions and themes of those scenes. Choose 10 songs that reflect the mood and tone of the book, and explain your choices in a written reflection of 5-8+ sentences. Consider how the music enhances the reader's understanding of the story and the characters.</p>	<p><b>WRITE A SERIES OF POEMS</b></p> <p>Create a series of 4 poems inspired by the text. Each poem should be 8+ lines, connected to the other poems in some way, and written from a different character's perspective, exploring their emotions and experiences in depth. Write a paragraph of 5-8 sentences each that explains how the poetic choices made illustrate your understanding of the story.</p>	<p><b>REWRITE A SECTION</b></p> <p>Choose a section from the text and rewrite it from a different character's perspective. Use your knowledge of the other characters' experiences and motivations to shape the section. Write a 5-8+ sentence reflection on the process and how it changed your understanding of the story.</p>
TIER THREE		
<p><b>LITERARY ANALYSIS</b></p> <p>Select a theme from the text and write 2 paragraphs of 5-8 sentences each about how it is shaped by literary devices or figurative language in the text. For example, you might focus on how imagery develops a theme. Use quotes and specific examples from the book to support your analysis.</p>	<p><b>DIALECTICAL JOURNAL</b></p> <p>A dialectical journal is a collection of key quotes from your reading of a text that pairs each quote with a specific response.</p> <p>Complete 5 journal entries based on analysis of a literary device- simile/metaphor, symbolism, characterization, foreshadowing, and/or personification. For each entry, you will identify the literary device in a quote, explain how the device is present in the quote, analyze how the device adds, enhances, changes, and/or deepens meaning in the quote.</p>	<p><b>COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS</b></p> <p>Choose another book that you have read previously and write 2 paragraphs of 5-8 sentences each about the similarities in these two stories. You may choose to compare the two protagonists (main characters), the common theme, or the common conflicts of the stories.</p>

## TIER FOUR

### LITERARY CRITICISM

*\*Honors English 1 students are required to complete this Tier 4 selection*

Choose one of the following critical approaches: historical or sociological. Analyze the text from this lens. **Honors English 1 students will write 3 paragraphs of 5-8 sentences each.** Make sure to include quotes and specific examples from the text to support your analysis.

**Historical:** This approach focuses on connection of work to the historical period in which it was written.

- Prompt: How does the story reflect the attitudes and beliefs of the time in which it was set? (Consider beliefs and attitudes related to race, religion, politics, gender, society, etc.)

**Sociological:** This approach focuses on man's relationship to others in society, politics, religion, etc.

- Prompt: How do economic conditions determine the direction of the characters' lives?

Have fun with these texts and activities! I am so looking forward to meeting you and working with these texts a little bit more when we start in the Fall. See you at Orientation!

*Miss Olsen*



Tier 3 Dialectical Journal Template

Quote	Page #	Analysis (2-3 sentences each)

<i>(Optional Extra Entry)</i>		

**Religion Department**  
**Summer Reading Assignment**  
***The Red Umbrella***

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The novel *The Red Umbrella* connects in several ways to aspects of Christianity. From a Catholic Christian perspective, consider the following ideas from the novel. Each relates to an episode from the Sacred Scriptures (the Bible). Read the Scripture passage given and answer the questions that go along with each passage. Submit your responses on a separate paper, preferably typed (double-spaced) but at least neatly and legibly handwritten.

**1. Faith in Adversity:**

In the novel, Lucia's parents make the difficult decision to send their children to the United States for their safety, trusting in God and the support of the Catholic Church. This act of faith and sacrifice shows trust in divine providence and the importance of community support during times of trial.

Genesis 12:1-9

<sup>1</sup> *The LORD said to Abram: Go forth<sup>[a]</sup> from your land, your relatives, and from your father's house to a land that I will show you. <sup>2</sup>[b] I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. <sup>3</sup> I will bless those who bless you and curse those who curse you. All the families of the earth will find blessing in you.<sup>[c]</sup>*

<sup>4</sup> *Abram went as the LORD directed him, and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he left Haran. <sup>5</sup>[d] Abram took his wife Sarai, his brother's son Lot, all the possessions that they had accumulated, and the persons they had acquired in Haran, and they set out for the land of Canaan. When they came to the land of Canaan, <sup>6</sup>[e] Abram passed through the land as far as the sacred place at Shechem, by the oak of Moreh. The Canaanites were then in the land.*

<sup>7</sup> *The LORD appeared to Abram and said: To your descendants I will give this land. So Abram built an altar there to the LORD who had appeared to him. <sup>8</sup> From there he moved on to the hill country east of Bethel, pitching his tent with Bethel to the west and Ai to the east. He built an altar there to the LORD and invoked the LORD by name.*

**Respond:** How may this have been a difficult decision for Abram? How does Abram show faith and trust in God? How does he have support of his community?

**2. The Red Umbrella as a Symbol of Hope:**

The red umbrella appears at pivotal moments in the story, symbolizing Lucia's connection to her family and her heritage. In Christian symbolism, the umbrella can be seen as a representation of God's protection, connecting to the Christian concept of God's sheltering presence in times of danger.

Matthew 8:23-27

<sup>23</sup> [a] *He got into a boat and his disciples followed him. <sup>24</sup> Suddenly a violent storm<sup>[b]</sup> came up on the sea, so that the boat was being swamped by waves; but he was asleep. <sup>25</sup> They came and woke him, saying, "Lord, save us!<sup>[c]</sup> We are perishing!" <sup>26</sup> He*

said to them, "Why are you terrified, O you of little faith?"<sup>[a]</sup> Then he got up, rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was great calm. <sup>27</sup>The men were amazed and said, "What sort of man is this, whom even the winds and the sea obey?"

**Respond:** How does Jesus calming the storm at sea symbolize God's presence and help for us in times of difficulty?

### 3. The Role of the Catholic Church:

The Catholic Church plays a crucial role in assisting the children during their transition to life in the United States. This involvement illustrates the Christian principle of charity and the church's mission to care for the poor and vulnerable.

Luke 19:1-10

<sup>1</sup>He came to Jericho and intended to pass through the town. <sup>2</sup>Now a man there named Zacchaeus, who was a chief tax collector and also a wealthy man, <sup>3</sup>was seeking to see who Jesus was; but he could not see him because of the crowd, for he was short in stature. <sup>4</sup>So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore tree in order to see Jesus, who was about to pass that way. <sup>5</sup>When he reached the place, Jesus looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, come down quickly, for today I must stay at your house." <sup>6</sup>And he came down quickly and received him with joy. <sup>7</sup>When they all saw this, they began to grumble, saying, "He has gone to stay at the house of a sinner." <sup>8</sup>But Zacchaeus stood there and said to the Lord, "Behold, half of my possessions, Lord, I shall give to the poor, and if I have extorted anything from anyone I shall repay it four times over." <sup>9</sup><sup>[b]</sup>And Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house because this man too is a descendant of Abraham. <sup>10</sup><sup>[c]</sup>For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save what was lost."

**Respond:** How does the episode with Zacchaeus show the importance Christianity places on concern for the poor?

### 4. The Concept of Home and Belonging:

Throughout the novel, Lucia grapples with the idea of home and identity. Christianity often emphasizes the notion of believers being part of a larger spiritual family. Lucia's journey reflects the Christian understanding of belonging to a community beyond geographical boundaries.

Acts of the Apostles 2:42-47; 4:32-35

<sup>42</sup>They devoted themselves to the teaching of the apostles and to the communal life, to the breaking of the bread and to the prayers. <sup>43</sup>Awe came upon everyone, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles. <sup>44</sup>All who believed were together and had all things in common; <sup>45</sup>they would sell their property and possessions and divide them among all according to each one's need. <sup>46</sup>Every day they devoted themselves to meeting together in the temple area and to breaking bread in their homes. They ate their meals with exultation and sincerity of heart, <sup>47</sup>praising God and enjoying favor with all the people. And every day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

<sup>32</sup>The community of believers was of one heart and mind, and no one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but they had everything in common. <sup>33</sup>With great power the apostles bore witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great favor was accorded them all. <sup>34</sup>There was no needy person among them, for those who owned property or houses would sell

them, bring the proceeds of the sale, <sup>35</sup> and put them at the feet of the apostles, and they were distributed to each according to need.

**Respond:** (1) How were early Christians devoted to their community of believers? That is, in what tangible ways did they demonstrate this devotion?

(2) As part of the John Carroll School community, how can you show devotion to this new community you will be part of?



**The Red Umbrella**  
**by**  
**Christina Diaz Gonzalez**



**Social Studies Project**

**9<sup>th</sup> Grade Orientation**

**The John Carroll School**



Welcome 9<sup>th</sup> Graders to Social Studies at John Carroll

Fellow Patriots,

The Social Studies Department would like to welcome you to The John Carroll School. We look forward to getting to know each of you in class during the 2025-2026 school year!

This project is to be completed prior to your orientation in August. You should first read the book, The Red Umbrella and then work on this packet. You will be using info from this packet and the book during orientation so, it is important to have this finished on time.

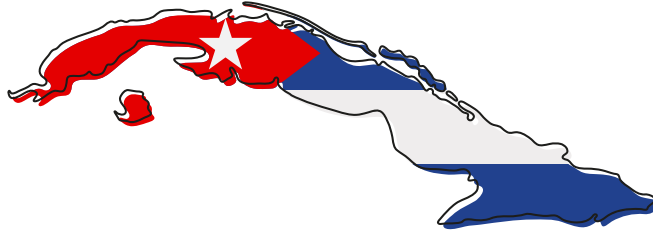
The packet itself will be collected the first day of classes by your Social Studies teacher. This will be one of your first grades in Social Studies.

We hope this packet helps you to explore the themes and fictional historical details shared in the novel.

God bless,

John Carroll Social Studies Department

# All About Cuba



Cuba's history is marked by colonial rule, revolutions, and a complex relationship with the United States and the Soviet Union. From its pre-Columbian inhabitants to the communist revolution, Cuba's path has been shaped by external powers and internal struggles.

## **Pre-Columbian Era and Spanish Colonization:**

### Indigenous Peoples:

- Before Christopher Columbus's arrival in 1492, Cuba was inhabited by various indigenous groups, including the Taínos, Ciboneys, and Guanahatabeyes.

### Spanish Conquest:

- In 1511, Spanish forces led by Diego de Velázquez conquered the island, establishing Baracoa as the first Spanish settlement. The Spanish forced the indigenous population into labor, leading to their decline.

### Colonial Rule:

- Cuba remained under Spanish rule for over three centuries, becoming a major sugar producer and a key part of the Spanish colonial empire.

### Havana's Significance:

- The city of Havana grew to become the capital and a major port, strategically important for trade and defense.

## **Independence Movements and the US Influence:**

### Rebellions:

- Cubans fought for independence from Spain in the 19th century, with several uprisings, including the Ten Years' War (1868-1878).

### Spanish-American War:

- The Spanish-American War of 1898 saw the United States intervene in Cuba's fight for independence, leading to Spain's defeat and the US occupation of the island.

### US Protectorate:

- Cuba gained formal independence in 1902 but remained under US influence through the Platt Amendment, which gave the US the right to intervene in Cuban affairs.

### US Involvement:

- The US exerted significant influence on Cuba's economy and political landscape for decades, leading to a period of economic dependence and US intervention.

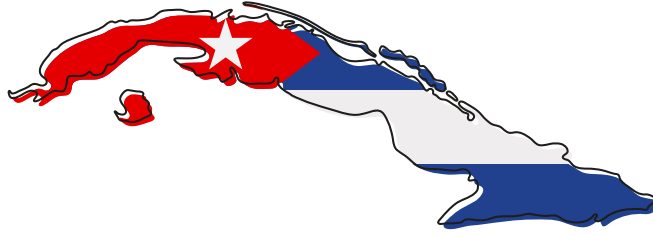
## **The Cuban Revolution and the Cold War:**

### Revolution:

- In 1959, the Cuban Revolution, led by Fidel Castro and Che Guevara, overthrew the US-backed dictator Fulgencio Batista.



# All About Cuba Continued



## Communist Rule:

- The revolution established a communist government in Cuba, aligning the country with the Soviet Union during the Cold War.

## Cuban Missile Crisis:

- The Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962 brought the world to the brink of nuclear war as the USSR deployed missiles to Cuba, sparking a tense standoff with the United States.

## Cold War Stalemate:

- Cuba remained a point of contention during the Cold War, with the US imposing an economic embargo that continues today.

## **Post-Cold War and Recent Developments:**

### Soviet Collapse:

- The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 severely impacted Cuba's economy, leading to a period of economic hardship known as the "Special Period".

### Economic Reforms:

- Cuba has undergone economic reforms in recent decades, including allowing private businesses and tourism.

### US-Cuba Relations:

- The US and Cuba have made efforts to improve relations, including the restoration of diplomatic ties in 2015.

To complete Page 4, please use the link [HERE](#) for Britannica.com.

To complete Page 7, please use the link [HERE](#) for a Smithsonian Resource on Operation Pedro Pan.



Smithsonian

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# About Cuba



- Please color Cuba in Red
- Please color US in Blue
- Identify Bodies of Water label on the map

## Information

Capital City - \_\_\_\_\_

Language(s) - \_\_\_\_\_

Population - \_\_\_\_\_

Currency - \_\_\_\_\_

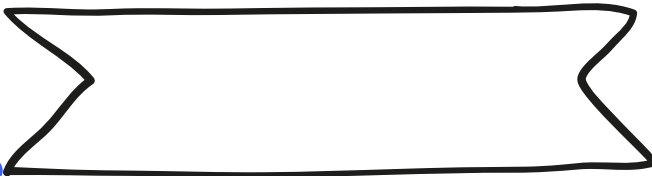
Sports - \_\_\_\_\_

Current Leader - \_\_\_\_\_

Entertainment - \_\_\_\_\_

## Major Holidays & Festivals

## Food of this Nation



## 3 Interesting Facts

1.

2.

3.



## Landmarks

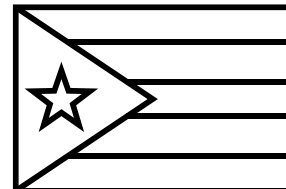
1.

2.

3.


4.

5.



# Landmark Research Report

Directions: Please select one landmark from Cuba. You may use something mentioned in Britannica.com link or you can search for a landmark yourself. Complete the items below.

**Photo of Landmark**

Landmark Name	Landmark Location

Is this landmark a  
Man-Made  
or  
Natural  
Landmark

.....

3 Facts

1.

2.

3.

.....

.....

Information

1.How old is the landmark?

2. How was the landmark made?

3. Why is this landmark important to the people of Cuba?

.....

# CUBA TIMELINE & THE NOVEL

**Directions:** Using the link from Smithsonian.com, search for major events and place them on the timeline below as it relates to Operation Pedro Pan. You will design your own timeline.