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### Home of the Brave Book Study Assignment Description

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# Home of the Brave Book Study Assignment Description

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Email Dr. David Wolff at [dwolff@pittstate.edu](mailto:dwolff@pittstate.edu) to share how you used this resource in your classroom or connect to initiate further discussion on the development of future resources!

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## Introduction

This assignment was created to use in English/Language Arts methods courses that introduced preservice teachers to the theories, content, instruction, assessment, and organization of the science of reading and structured literacy.

Preservice teachers explore various types of assessments and learn how to use assessment data to plan instruction for students in the areas of concepts of print, phonological awareness, phonemic awareness, phonics, word recognition, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, reading, writing, listening, and speaking.

## Keywords

case study, Home of the Brave, Katherine Applegate, teacher education, elementary education, children's literature, novel unit, language learning, second language acquisition, science of reading, pillars of literacy, reading instruction

## Abstract

Individuals lead storied lives, and everyone has a story to tell. Our stories can be shared orally and documented in print. Often, learners are exposed to stories through novels and other trade books. Teacher educators may benefit from using the stories in novels and trade books as case studies in preservice teacher preparation course. This assignment description outlines how to use the novel, *Home of the Brave* by Katherine Applegate, as a case study to contextualize and understand the lived story of an individual learning a second language and living in a new country. Through the novel, preservice teachers experience the dilemmas faced and celebrations experienced as faced by the protagonist, Kek. Case studies are an effective teaching strategy for students in teacher education. Willems and Gonzalez-DeHass (2017) assert that case studies are a “vehicle to prepare preservice teacher for future classroom decision making” (p. ix). Further, Gorski and Pothini (2018) stated “case method’s effectiveness in deepening critical thinking

abilities, problem-solving skills, and other competencies in professionals from a variety of fields” and allow us to “muddle through the gray areas [practical solutions to complex problems] by considering all that makes them gray” (p. 6).

## *Home of the Brave:*

### *Weekly Discussion Prompts*

<i>Essential Question:</i>	How can teachers help all learners become confident, proficient, and independent readers and writers?
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Weber et al. (2014) defined a case study as, “learning scenarios mirroring real-world problems that end in a dilemma engage the reader in a reflective analysis of teaching and learning” and “provide an opportunity for both the prospective teacher and in-service teacher to begin anticipating the issues that they might encounter and be required to solve” (p. 2).

Case studies:

- Are classroom dilemmas (Williams & Gonzalez-DeHass, 2017; Weber et al., 2014; Chambliss & Valli, 2011),
- Are real-life classroom scenarios (Gorski & Pothini, 2018; Williams & Gonzalez-DeHass, 2017; Weber et al., 2014),
- Do not require a field experience component (Williams & Gonzalez-DeHass, 2017),
- Support future classroom decision making, critical thinking, and problem solving (Gorski & Pothini, 2018; Williams & Gonzalez-DeHass, 2017; Weber et al., 2014),
- Bridge theory and practice (Williams & Gonzalez-DeHass, 2017),
- Are the next best thing to actual classroom experiences (Williams & Gonzalez-DeHass, 2017).

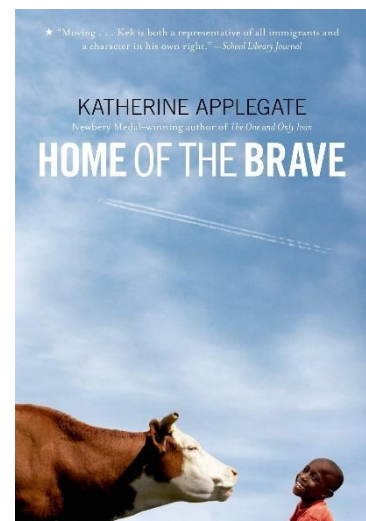
In this assignment, you will be reading about a student struggling with living and learning with dyslexia. Throughout the semester, you will analyze the text by reflecting on the story and how it connects to what you are learning in the course.

#### Assignment:

Each week, you are assigned chapters to read in Katherine Applegate’s novel, *Home of the Brave*.

Weekly readings are as follows:

- Week 1: Part 1 p. 1-50 & Reader’s Guide p. 259-263
- Week 2: Part 2 p. 51-128
- Week 3: Part 3 p. 129-224
- Week 4: Part 4 p. 225-242 & Epilogue p. 243-249



After your assigned reading, reflect on the chapters as they relate to language development, literacy development, and second language acquisition.

Choose 1 of the following prompts and submit your response on Harmonize.

- ✓ Your responses must be supported by evidence from the novel.
- ✓ Your verbal response must be at least 2 ½ minutes – 5 minutes in length, **OR** your written response must be at least 250 words.
- ✓ Your responses should demonstrate your evolving understanding of language and reading development as well as your understanding of second language acquisition.

### **Prompt Options for Weeks 1-4:**

- Each section opens with an African proverb. Choose one and explain its significance in relation to Kek's experience (Applegate, 2007).
- Kek uses similes to compare things in his new life to his old life. From this week's readings, which simile stands out to you as the most powerful? What does that simile tell you about Kek's values and his way of looking at the world (Applegate, 2007)?
- What are challenges Kek faced in this week's chapters? What do you believe was his biggest challenge? Why?
- What are qualities that Kek possesses that help him succeed in America? How do these qualities show that he is a survivor (Applegate, 2007)?
- Describe Kek's experiences at school. How does Kek's experience compare to your experience? Do you know someone who had a similar experience at school as Kek did?
- How is Kek's language acquisition impacting his daily life? Impacting life at school?
- What connections are you making between *Home of the Brave* and this class based on this week's chapters?
- What connections are you making between *Home of the Brave* and any of your Block 1, 2, or 3 courses based on this week's chapters?
- If you were using this novel as an Interactive Read Aloud (IRA), what questions would you pose to your students from this week's chapters that cause deep thinking and productive discussions?

### **Ongoing Prompts used in-class:**

- Throughout the book, Kek does not feel that he belongs. (e.g., "It is a strange pain to be with those you belong to and feel you don't belong" [Applegate, 2007, p. 35]). When have you felt that you do not belong with people that do not understand you? How has Kek's experience changed your thinking about belonging?
- Kek had to redefine what *home* meant. What does *home* mean to you? Why?
- What is the significance of the title, *Home of the Brave*?

## Rubric

Criteria	Glow: Evidence of Meeting Standard (1 point)	Grows: Opportunities for Growth (0 points)
<b><u>Ideas &amp; Content:</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Information (facts and ideas) is analyzed, applied, and evaluated thoroughly.</li><li>Opinions are being formed.</li></ul> (x2)		
<b><u>Organization:</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Responded in a coherent manner.</li><li>Organized logically with transitions.</li></ul> (x1)		
<b><u>Evidence</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Response is supported appropriately by the novel</li><li>Students support their beliefs with evidence from text, lectures, practices, practicum, and theorists, etc.</li><li>Including references and in-text citations according to APA 7 formatting (attached)</li></ul> (x1)		
<b><u>Mechanics:</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Response is clear and concise.</li><li>Verbal recording, the response must be at least 2.5 minutes.</li><li>Written response, the response must be at least 250 words.</li><li>Response reflects professional voice; not informal or causal.</li></ul> (x1)		

Total: 5 points each

## References

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- Willems, P. P. & Gonzalez-DeHass, A. R. (2017). *Case studies in educational psychology: Elementary school grades*. Rowman & Littlefield.



## Professional Writing: APA 7 References Page & In-text Citations

By David Wolff, Assistant Professor, Pittsburg State University

### Creating Reference Page

Author	Date	Title	Source	
			Publisher	DOI or URL
Author, A. A. & Author B. B.  Name of Group.	(2021).	Title of book.  Title of book (2 <sup>nd</sup> ed.).  Title of book [Audiobook].	Publisher Name.	<a href="https://xxxxx">https://xxxxx</a>

### **Book**

Author, A. A. (Year of publication). *Title of work: Capital letter also for subtitle*. Publisher Name. DOI (if available)

Example:

Hunt, L. M. (2015). *Fish in a tree*. Puffin Books.

### In-Text Citations

Three kinds of information to be included in in-text citations:

The author's last name and the work's date of publication must always appear, and these items must match exactly the corresponding entry in the references list.

- Author name and publication date are included in the narration, e.g., "According to Hunt (2015), people..."
- Author name and publication date are separated by a comma and placed after the fact, e.g., (Hunt, 2015).
- For a direct quotation, authors name, publication date, and page number are separated by commas and placed after the sentence, e.g., (Hunt, 2015, p. 417).