A Thousand Splendid Suns Summer Reading Guide

To be prepared for the opening of the school year you should:

1) Have the novel read. Please remember that academic reading means CLOSE reading, not skimming or relying on summaries.
2) Be prepared to test on this book. At the discretion of your teacher this test may be given on the first day of class or any other time early in the year.
3) Be prepared for any other type of assignment your English teacher may choose to give. This might include essay writing, presentation, discussion, project, etc.
4) Be prepared on the first day of school with written (typed) responses to the work/questions below and be prepared to upload your work to TURN-IT-IN.

1. Read about the history of Afghanistan since 1970 and summarize in written (typed) notes the Taliban's rise to power. Locate Afghanistan on a map and know the capital. Be sure to cite your source(s).

2. What time period does the novel cover?

3. Take notes on these characters, their attributes and changes they may undergo; note whether they are static/dynamic and round/flat characters:
   a. Mariam
   b. Laila
   c. Jalil
   d. Nana
   e. Rasheed
   f. Tariq
   g. Aziza
   h. Zalmai

4. List specific internal (person vs. person) and external (person vs. society) conflicts portrayed in the text.

5. Take notes on relationships between/among the following characters:
   a. Mariam and her parents
   b. Rasheed and Mariam
   c. Rasheed and Laila
   d. Laila and her parents
   e. Laila and Tariq
   f. Rasheed and his children
   g. Mariam and Laila
   How do these relationships develop and change throughout the course of the novel?

6. Mariam's mother tells her: "Women like us. We endure. It's all we have."
   Discuss how this sentiment informs Mariam's life and how it relates to the   larger themes of the novel.

7. Note themes concerning the following and how they are developed:
   a. love
   b. war

c. education
d. femininity
e. arranged marriage
f. illegitimacy
g. female bonding
h. victimization

7. Note where the title is referenced in the text. What is the significance of this title?