

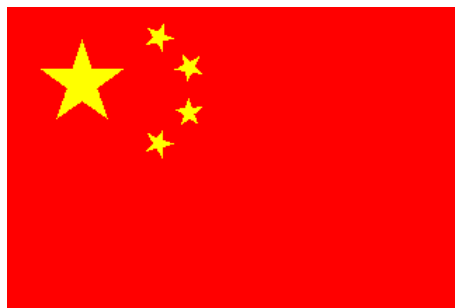
Study Guide for Amy Tan's *The Joy Luck Club*

Purpose: Possibly one of the most confusing aspects of this novel is the sheer number of central characters. There are four mothers and four daughters, and their stories are interwoven throughout the novel. It is difficult to keep from getting lost among the names and stories, and it is even harder to keep in mind traits and unique, shaping stories for each of the characters. This strategy helps to isolate the characters into mother/daughter pairs so that the reader can focus on themes and aspects of each mother/daughter relationship, rather than staying bogged down in the multitude of stories.

Context: Students should be given the study guide at the beginning of the novel, and should continue to fill out the commonalities and differences throughout their reading of the novel. Each character has four appearances throughout the novel, so the organizer should be filled in throughout the duration of the novel.

Directions:

- 1) Have students read ch.1 of the novel for homework. Tell students to pay particular attention to the events and characteristics of both the mother and the daughter throughout their reading of the chapter.
- 2) In class after ch. 1 has been read, put up an overhead of the study guide. Ask students to give the basic stories of both Suyuan and Jing-mei Woo. Fill these in on their respective sides of the organizer. Next, have students fill in the similarities and differences between the characteristics of both mother and daughter as revealed in the chapter.
- 3) The teacher should then divide the class into four groups. Each group will be responsible for charting one of the four different mother/daughter pairs. The teacher should pass out the blank study guides, and have students write who their mother/daughter pair will be at the top (Suyuan and Jing-mei Woo, An-mei and Rose Hsu, Lindo and Waverly Jong, or Ying-ying and Lena St. Clair). As students read the novel, have them periodically fill out their charts.
- 4) At the end of each major section of the novel (four vignettes each), have each group report their findings on similarities and differences in each of the characters. This will serve as a good review for the entire class.



Study Guide

Name of Mother/Daughter Pair _____

Mother's Story #1

Title: _____

Plot

Summary: _____

Characteristics

Revealed: _____

Daughter's Story #1

Title: _____

Plot

Summary: _____

Characteristics

Revealed: _____

What are the differences in personality between mother and daughter?

How do the two stories connect (similarities, differences in mother and daughter)?

Mother's Story #2

Title: _____

Plot

Summary: _____

Characteristics

Revealed: _____

Daughter's Story #2

Title: _____

Plot

Summary: _____

Characteristics

Revealed: _____

What are the differences in personality between mother and daughter?

How do the two stories connect (similarities, differences in mother and daughter)?