An Ordinary Man – Chapters 1-4

Respond to each of the four questions below. Use complete sentences—and complete thoughts. ☺ You may, of course, use your books.

1. Think about what makes a good argument “good” in the eyes of the reader. Why do you think it is important for Rusesabagina to tell us about his personal history? How does this help us to understand the book’s purpose?

2. Rusesabagina explains that he “was a fast learner” on p. 43. Describe the lesson that he learns and explain why you think he chooses to share it with the reader.

3. Rusesabagina describes how prejudice affects the people he interacts with in Kigali, his wife, his workers, his employers, etc. However, on p. 46 he describes his own personal experience with prejudice, not as a Hutu, but as a muzungu. How has this word’s meaning changed from the start of the book? How does Rusesabagina respond to this label?

4. Rusesabagina says it bothers him when Rwanda’s genocide is “described as the product of ancient tribal hatreds” and declares that “nothing could be further from the truth (53).” According to Rusesabagina, what is the truth? (A good answer will consider the events that led up to the end of the chapter.)