

## AP English Literature & Composition Summer Enrichment 2020



AP English Literature and Composition uses literature to deeply examine topics such as family, death, justice, technology, religion, and work (just to name a few). John Steinbeck's The Grapes of Wrath is considered a "Great American Novel" because it features all these topics and many more. Your job this summer will be to read The Grapes of Wrath closely and consider it as our "anchor text" to begin the school year together. Contained within the novel is precise characterization, complex plot

development, biblical allusion, implementation of symbol and archetype, and powerful arguments regarding the human condition – all of which are the underpinnings of effective literature.

You can check out these books from Kristin Bettencourt (in the textbook room) or you will need to make other arrangements for obtaining the books (visit the public library, buy it, borrow it, etc.). I do suggest (if it is a possibility), buying your own copies so that you may write notes in the margins. These books can be purchased at a relatively inexpensive cost. At last check, Amazon had a used copy of *Grapes of Wrath* for \$1.76 and *How to Read Literature Like a Professor* for \$1.05 (Yes, really! However, it will cost an additional \$3.99 for shipping.)

Read these books carefully this summer. If you bought your own copy, define words and interact with the text in the margins as you read. If you did not purchase your book, either keep notes in a journal (be sure to write down page numbers) or invest in some post-its, which are great for marking specific sections of a text and noting important ideas or incidents. I highly encourage you to read with a dictionary or dictionary app by your side. *Grapes of Wrath* is rich with complex vocabulary and allusions. You will struggle to grasp all the nuances of this text if you do not define words and research allusions as you read.

Now, for the summer assignments.

1. After you have read *Grapes of Wrath*, select one of the following prompts and write a 3 – 5 page response in MLA format.
  - Analyze Tom Joad's growth throughout the novel. Despite the fact that Tom is not a young boy, does the novel have the characteristics of a *bildungsroman*, or coming-of-age story?
  - How does *The Grapes of Wrath* operate as a proletarian, political novel? What social changes does the novel suggest will help implement its philosophy?
  - Describe the Californian landowners' attitudes toward the migrant farmers. How does their prejudice parallel other forms of discrimination? What does the novel hope to achieve by depicting the landowners in this manner?

- What is the novel's attitude toward the American Dream? Has it been threatened by the dehumanization of the migrants or reconstructed through Casy and Tom's efforts?

You must come with a hardcopy of this essay on the first day of school. I will not allow you to print it at the beginning of class, nor is it acceptable to email me a copy.

If you have any questions over summer or need clarification on the summer assignment, please don't hesitate to contact me. You can email me at [jjeffries@turlock.k12.ca.us](mailto:jjeffries@turlock.k12.ca.us).

Enjoy your summer!

Mr. Jeffries