

AP Literature and Composition

Mrs. Mayo

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AP Lit Summer Reading 2021-2022

As you might guess, AP Lit is a challenging course, designed for both highly motivated and highly capable students who are interested in pursuing potential college credit. AP Lit is quite a bit different from AP Language. This course will push you to explore literary elements such as a work's structure, style and themes, as well as analyze the use and, more importantly, the purpose of figurative language, imagery, symbolism, and tone. You will be learning to analyze and interpret imaginative literature through careful reading and critical analysis of representative works from various genres and periods. AP Lit is taught as a college-level English class and thus includes a **heavy workload, especially outside reading**. Be prepared during the school year to schedule reading and writing into your study time. *AP requires you to be a scholar willing to develop scholarly habits.*

Books

- Foster, Thomas C. *How to Read Literature Like a Professor: A Lively and Entertaining Guide to Reading Between the Lines*. New York: Harper Perennial, 2014. Print. (Revised edition)
- Kesey, Ken. *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*. New York: Signet Group, 1962. Print.
- Beckett, Samuel. *Waiting for Godot*. New York: Grove Press, 1954. Print.

I recommend students purchase the books as they will need to engage in the books fully and will access them at various points in the school year.

Assignment #1 (DUE DATE: this assignment should be SHARED with me by midnight on Friday, July 9, 2021 – emayo@douglasps.net.)

1. **READ** *How to Read Literature Like a Professor: A Lively and Entertaining Guide to Reading Between the Lines* by Thomas C. Foster. This text is an easy-to-read introduction to the themes and associations all pieces of literature share. We will refer to this text throughout the year in combination with literature we read.
2. **SUMMARIZE**. For each of the 26 chapters, provide TWO (2) bulleted summaries of Foster's **key points**. I expect each bullet to be written in complete sentences and for you to carefully read and **condense** key ideas. These summaries should be typed with page numbers in parentheses. Use proper MLA format to cite.

Example Format (Typed, MLA page formatting):

Chapter 9: "It's More Than Just Rain or Snow"

- Weather, apart from serving the purpose of creating a setting, is usually symbolic and or serves a subtle role in developing theme, character growth, etc. (Foster 70).
- Rain, and other elements for that matter, can evoke an array of meanings, ranging from death by flood to rebirth and a cleanse of wrongdoings (Foster 73).

Assignment 2 (DUE DATE: this assignment should be SHARED with me by midnight on Wednesday, August 11, 2021 – emayo@douglasps.net)

1. **READ** *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* by Ken Kesey.
2. **APPLY How to Read Literature . . .**: As you read *OFOTCN*, consider what you learned from this guide. Make direct, specific connections from the novel to **six of the chapters** from *How to Read Literature Like a Professor*.

Make a numbered list of these six connections, providing a direct quotation from the book, citing page numbers, and explaining the connection fully (in 3-5 sentences). Your application will be similar to the literary examples Foster uses to make his points. Include Works Cited entries for both texts.

Think of it this way: Imitate Foster's explanations, using *Cuckoo's Nest* as your example. What passages from *Cuckoo's Nest* could be used as examples to prove the points that Foster makes in his book? Your objective is to demonstrate your understanding of Foster's ideas, applying them to *Cuckoo's Nest* and exhibiting writing skills that are appropriate for an AP class.

Example of Format (Typed, MLA page formatting):

"It's fall coming, I thought, I can smell that sour-molasses smell of silage, clanging the air like a bell--smell somebody's been burning burning oak leaves, left them to smolder overnight because they're too green. It's fall coming, I kept thinking, fall coming; just like it was the strangest thing to ever happen" (Kesey 163).

This passage connects with chapter 20 entitled "So Does Season," which discusses the implications seasons can have on a story. This passage is a short description by the narrator, Bromden, who explains that he can sense the changing of the seasons from summer to fall. Foster asserts that throughout literature the four different seasons have come to represent different principles and ideas, and that they are generally similar throughout their usage; summer has come to represent vibrance and energy, while autumn has come to represent decline and the withering away of life (Foster 186). Thus it is no coincidence that McMurphy, full of energy and life, arrives at the end of summer, and must experience an autumn that will wither away his will and spirit (Foster 186). The seasons at play in the story come to serve as foreshadowing of the plot that will occur later on as McMurphy falls ill to the struggles of the mental institution.

Assignment #3 (DUE DATE: this will be collected on the first day of school. You MAY share it with me before then if you would like. Otherwise you need to bring in a PRINTED copy on the first day.)

1. **Read *Waiting for Godot* by Samuel Beckett.**
2. **Complete an Excerpt Journal for this book.** (The Excerpt Journal assignment is explained at the end of this document).

PLAN YOUR TIME. Print a calendar; map out reasonable reading time. It will seem less daunting and, in the end, be a much more enjoyable journey. I think you will find all books interesting reads, but they will not be interesting if you cram them in at the last minute.

Excerpt Journals (for any text)

You will choose **three excerpts** from *throughout* the book/play that illustrate important literary devices that are used by the author (including characterization, style, symbolism, theme, etc). NO OUTSIDE SOURCES MAY BE USED!

Format:

- Each excerpt should be significant. This means that the length could vary. You may find a passage that is significant or you might find one line that works. Each excerpt should be typed out and cited properly.
- After each passage, discuss the excerpt's place within the narrative and why you feel it is important. You should *always* think about why the passage is important to the novel as well. You must identify the literary devices used and explain why/how the **specific words/literary devices** used in the passage are significant. Each discussion should be a paragraph long – do not be wordy! Be concise and get to your point in an eloquent manner. **DO NOT SIMPLY SUMMARIZE THE PLOT.** You must weave textual evidence from the passage INTO your analysis as well.

What excerpts should you choose?

- Excerpts that demonstrate effective use of *literary devices*.
- Excerpts that provide important descriptions of a *character that ties in to a theme*.
- Excerpts that demonstrate the *writer's style*.
- Excerpts that demonstrate a pattern (overlapping images, repetition of idea, details, symbols, etc.).

Sample of an Excerpt Journal entry focused on writer's style:

Estragon Then adieu.
Pozzo Adieu.
Vladimir Adieu.
 [*Silence. No one moves.*]
Vladimir Adieu.
Pozzo Adieu.
Estragon Adieu.
 [*Silence.*]
Pozzo And thank you.
Vladimir Thank *you*.
Pozzo Not at all.
Estragon Yes yes.
Pozzo No no.
Vladimir Yes yes.
Estragon No no.
 [*Silence.*] (Beckett 1.24-40) pages 37-38

This exchange is a paramount example of Beckett's writing style. His writing is short and sparse, which adds to the simplicity of the men in the play. The short lines and choppy syntax attest to the men's short, and, if one could imagine the play, comical conversations where they repeat the same words such as "Adieu," "No No" and "Yes Yes" to each other (Beckett 1.24-40). The humor in the play and in this exchange is key to the play because it acts as comic relief to distract the audience from focusing on how pathetic the men actually are. They are waiting for a man who might never show up and some (Estragon) can't even remember how many times they have been waiting in that spot for Godot. Beckett's minimalist style of writing adds comic relief to the play as a whole.

Grading for Excerpt Journals

A All passages that are used are meaningful and significant; thoughtful interpretation and commentary about the text is included; journal thoroughly analyzes how literary devices (like theme, diction, imagery, syntax, symbolism, style, etc.) contribute to the meaning of the text; writer uses textual evidence within the explanation to thoroughly analyze the excerpt; analysis of text is complete and thorough and plot summary is not given; journal is neat, organized and legible.

B Most passages that are used are significant in some way; most analysis of the text is thoughtful; includes some comments about literary elements (like theme, diction, imagery, syntax, symbolism, etc.) but the explanation of how these elements contribute to the meaning of the text is not as thorough as an A journal; some textual evidence may be used throughout the explanation; analysis of text is sufficient; journal is neat, organized and legible.

C A few passages that are used are significant in some way; most of the commentary is vague, unsupported or consists of plot summary/paraphrase rather than analysis; literary elements are discussed, but not analyzed; journal addresses most of the reading assignment, but not very thoroughly; textual evidence has not been used within explanation; journal is relatively neat; student has perhaps not followed all directions.

D Most passages that are used are insignificant (journal may be missing excerpts); all notes are plot summary or paraphrase instead of analysis; few literary elements are discussed (if any); there is no discussion on how the text is important to the overall novel; textual evidence has not been used within explanation; student has not followed directions; journal is difficult to read/follow.

F Journal has not been completed/turned in on the due date.