

AP LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION SUMMER READING ASSIGNMENT 2013

While AP Literature and Composition is an enjoyable and exciting course, it is also a challenging and demanding one. The AP examination in English Literature and Composition requires extensive preparation and reading. Your summer reading is an important part of that preparation to help you grow as a reader and thinker. The AP English Exam always has three essay questions and about sixty multiple-choice questions. One of the essay questions is open-ended and allows you to choose the work of literature for response. Some of the best essays have come from works read over the summer. You should complete the three assignments below before you come to class in August.

If you have any questions please feel free to email me @

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1. Ken Kesey's *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*

Read the novel, marking important passages and literary devices as you go. Early in your reading, choose ONE character from the list below and pay special attention to his or her development as you read. You should create a visual "map" of their progression throughout the novel. You must have at least seven points on your map. Each point should have a quote and a paragraph of analysis. You should also include a two to three paragraph analysis of the character as a whole.

Character Options:

Chief Bromden, Randle McMurphy, Nurse Ratched, (easier)

Dale Harding, Billy Bibbet (harder)

2. Choice novel from list:

Pick **one** novel below, and read it carefully. Then choose one of the prompts listed below and write a well organized essay (@ least 2 pp.) that articulates your understanding of the novel as a whole, and incorporates direct textual evidence.

1. *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*-Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn
2. *The Bluest Eye*-Toni Morrison

Prompt Choices for Assignment 2:

For *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*: In a literary work, a minor character, often known as a foil, possesses traits that emphasize, by contrast or comparison, the distinctive characteristics and qualities of the main character. For example, the ideas or behavior of a minor character might be used to highlight the weaknesses or strengths of the main character. Choose a novel or play in which a minor character serves as a foil for the main character. Then write an essay in which you analyze how the relation between the minor character and the major character illuminates the meaning of the work.

For *The Bluest Eye*: In some works of literature, childhood and adolescence are portrayed as time graced by innocence and a sense of wonder; in other works they are depicted as times of tribulation and terror. Focusing on your novel, explain how its representation of childhood or adolescence shapes the meaning of the novel as a whole.

3. How to Read Literature Like a Professor by Thomas C. Foster

This is not a novel; rather, it is an engaging approach to the study of literature in general. Foster is witty and conversational, using amusing and unexpected examples from a wide variety of texts. This will be your first taste of the different levels of thinking about literature we'll be covering in detail throughout the course. We will re-read many of these chapters together in class, but an initial reading of this book will ensure your success and understanding from the beginning of our time together. Answer at least 20 of the provided questions from the sheet.

How to Read Literature Like a Professor QUESTIONS

You must answer **twenty** of the following questions fully and completely. Be prepared to discuss them at length. Put thought into each question you answer.

1. What is the "Faust legend?" Why is *RAISIN IN THE SUN* a version of it?
2. How do memory, symbol, and pattern affect the reading of literature? Could their importance be over-emphasized? Discuss a time when your appreciation of a work was enhanced by understanding symbol or pattern.
3. How does the recognition of patterns make it easier to read complicated literature?
4. List the five aspects of the QUEST and then apply them to something you have read in the form used on pp.3-5 in the text.
5. What do professors mean when they say, "Sometimes a cigar is just a cigar"?
6. Choose a meal from a piece of fiction and apply the ideas of Chapter 2 to this literary depiction.
7. What are the essentials of the "vampire story"? Apply this to a novel or story you have read. Now apply these ideas to a section from a novel or to an historical situation.
8. Select three sonnets and show which form they are. Discuss how their content reflects the form. (submit copies of the sonnets, marked to show analysis).
9. Define intertextuality. Discuss three examples that have helped you in reading specific works.
10. Discuss a work that you are familiar with that alludes to or reflects Shakespeare. Show how the author uses this connection thematically. Read pp. 44-46 carefully. In these pages, Foster shows how Fugard reflects Shakespeare through both plot and theme. In your discussion, focus on theme.
11. Find a Biblical allusion in one of the novels you have read this summer. Explain how this extends or emphasizes the story thematically.
12. Think of a work of literature that reflects a fairy tale. Discuss the parallels. Does it create irony or deepen appreciation?
13. Discuss the importance of weather in a specific novel...not in terms of plot.
14. Present examples of the two kinds of violence found in literature. Show how the effects are different.

15. Use the process described on pp.106 and investigate the symbolism of the oceans in *Snow Falling on Cedars* (chapter 8). (Hatsu: “Oceans don’t mix” Ishamael “Water is water”)
16. Assume that Foster is right and “it is all political.” Use his criteria to show that one novel studied from last year is political. (you may choose any novel studied)
17. Apply the criteria on pp.119 to 4 characters from your AP or pre-AP novels. Create a comparison chart. Try to choose 2 characters that will have many matches and two that will have only a few. Draw some conclusions from this chart.

18. OK ..the sex chapters. The ideas from these chapters that will linger with us are 1) the difference between sex scenes in literature and pornography and 2) the idea that sex scenes in good writing usually have a much deeper intent (SYMBOLISM!) than the opportunity to present an interesting human activity. IN other words, sex is often suggested with much more art and effort than it is described, and, if the author is doing his job, it reflects and creates theme or character. Choose a novel or movie in which sex is SUGGESTED, but not described, and discuss HOW the relationship is suggested and how this implication affects the theme or develops characterization.
19. Think of a “baptism scene” from a novel or movie. How was the character different after the experience.
20. Discuss at least 5 different aspects of a specific poem or novel that Foster would classify under “ geography.”

21. Find a poem (You get bonus points if it is by a poet mentioned in Chapter 20.) that mentions a specific season. Then discuss how the poet uses the season in a meaningful, traditional, or unusual way.
22. Write your own definition for each of these words. A. archetype B. collective unconscious C. resonance D. frisson. Now write about a song that you like and use all of these words in your writing.
23. Figure out Harry Potter’s scar.
24. Recall four people who died of a disease in a book or movie. Make a chart to see if these deaths reflected the “ principles governing the use of disease in literature.” Put a check plus if an aspect was especially a focus. Discuss: Do these principles really determine the effectiveness of the death as related to plot, theme, or symbolism?
25. After reading Chapter 25, choose a scene or episode from a novel, play or epic written before the Twentieth Century. Contrast how it could be viewed by a reader from the Twenty-First Century with how it might be viewed by a contemporary reader. Focus on specific assumptions that the author makes, assumptions that would not make it in this century.
26. Read the short story starting on page 245. Complete the exercise on pages 265-6, following the directions exactly. Then compare your writing with the three examples. How did you do? What does the following essay comparing Laura with Persephone add to your appreciation of Mansfield’s story?
27. From your study of literature, discuss some important aspects of careful and critical reading that Foster does not address in this book.
28. Choose a motif not discussed in this book (as the horse reference on pp. 280) and note its appearance in 3 or 4 different works. What does this idea seem to signify? Big bonus if you find an example where it is used ironically.