

AP Literature and Composition 2021-22 Summer Reading Plan and Resources

Read *How to Read Literature Like a Professor* by Thomas C. Foster (revised ed.)
(ISBN-13: 978-0062301673 ISBN-10: 9780062301673). Annotations HIGHLY recommended

Author Thomas Foster has a relatable, conversational writing style and sense of dry humor that many of you will appreciate. He's not trying to *make* things complicated in this book - he's working to make literature *less* complicated for you to analyze. Enjoy!

- As you read *How to Read Literature Like a Professor*, I'm asking that you create a brief outline for each chapter. And I mean BRIEF!
 - Your outline could be as simple as making a list of 2-3 ideas, titles, or terms that reflect the important points Foster makes in each chapter - but just to the end of Chapter 26, page 261.
 - You do not need to (and really should not) read beyond Chapter 26. We will handle the final chapter together when school starts.
- Label each section of your outline with its chapter name, and try to capture the lesson that Foster wants readers to take from his chapters. Be clear, but Brief!
- You will be asked to turn this outline in on the first day of school as proof of completion of the reading
 - May be typed or handwritten - there will be an eCampus assignment open for you to upload and submit any online outlines (available by the end of June)- I suggest using Google Drive to create your work.
- We will be working extensively with information from this text throughout the school year, so it is'd recommend that you purchase the book. Contact me if this will be an issue (finnegka@myscps.us)

Below is a *SUGGESTED* reading plan/pacing guide for *How to Read Literature Like a Professor*, along with some video links to help illustrate and support your reading and understanding.

I've broken the book into four sections, which you should be able to get through in about a month at the pace I've set here, averaging about 10 pages per day (@ 20 minutes) and around 10 minutes to add notes to your outline for each chapter (due the first day of school). So, the whole thing, according to this pacing guide, should take you about a month at 30 minutes of reading and notes each day. This does not include time spent watching the videos - those are completely optional, but may help solidify concepts, so check them out. You may certainly create your own plan; this is merely a suggestion.

Section 1

June 1 – June 7: (2.5 hours) Read and outline chapters 1 – 5 and consider:

- Quests – as Foster explains, a quest isn't just a trip, it is a heroic journey of self-discovery. Take a look at [this video for modern examples](#).
- Eating – it's not just food, it's an opportunity to show relationships; [here is a great video about meal scenes in films](#); and [here's a little video about drinking milk](#) that is pretty interesting, especially if you've seen *Mad Max*, *Fury Road*
- Vampires (not the sparkly kinds) – Think of Christoff from *The Truman Show*, President Snow from *The Hunger Games*. The vampire archetype typically involves the theme of a loss of innocence.
- Sonnets – here are a couple of handsome British actors reading Shakespearean sonnets https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b6Q_loj6AhQ and <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xP06F0yynic>

- Recycled works – remember how Foster talks about the rabbit hole archetype? [Take a look at this scene from *The Matrix*](#)

Section 2

June 8 - June 14: (3 hours) Read and outline chapters 6 – 11 and consider:

- Shakespeare – we’ll be studying the Bard specifically in *Hamlet* and *Othello*, and once you recognize his style, you will see his influence everywhere, even in weird places like Star Trek! And did you know that *The Lion King* is based on the play *Hamlet*? [Click here for more more examples.](#)
- Bible – if you ever went to Sunday school, you’ll see Biblical allusions everywhere, especially Edenic imagery (from the Garden of Eden) and Christ figures; for those who aren’t as familiar with the Old and New Testaments, try these two videos: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oggODgb9K2U> (part 1), and <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TfVSikoglw4> (part 2)
- Fairy Tales - think about *Cinderella* paired with movies like *Pretty Woman*, *Ella Enchanted*, and *Cinderella Story*; you can also see much more subtle uses of fairy tale archetypes; for a fun twist on those archetypes, re-watch the original *Shrek*
- Greek Myths – if you don’t know your basic gods and goddesses, you really need to review them! Try this little 8-minute video on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N5gRZ-C0vOc>
- Rain/Snow/Water: Remember, AUTHORS MAKE THE WEATHER! Take a look at this little video with rain scenes: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uf34E1BZduo>
- Violence: they’re scenes that are hard to read (or watch), but scenes of violence can play an important symbolic function; I’m not going to post videos here, but think of all the violent scenes you’ve seen in various movies and consider WHY they’re there.

Section 3

June 15 - June 21: (3.5 hours) Read and outline chapters 12-18 and consider:

- Symbols – it’s not enough to notice a symbol; you have to consider how it’s being used. Foster talks about Robert Frost and how that poet uses symbols. Woods are not just woods. Snow is not just snow. Fire is not just fire. Take a look at this video of a Frost poem: [“Fire and Ice”](#)
- Politics: As Foster says, almost all writing can be read with an eye to politics because authors don’t write in a social vacuum. Some texts, however, are more overtly political than others. Think about the dystopian satire, for example. *The Hunger Games* series takes on a larger meaning when you consider the social context of the 1% vs. the 99% in American society and the opulence and plenty of the capitol juxtaposed with the hardship and squalor of the districts. Want to see more? Consider why everyone is talking about *The Handmaid’s Tale*, a series on Hulu, based on Margaret Atwood’s novel from the 80’s: [Trailer for Season 1 of *The Handmaid’s Tale*](#)
- Christ Figures (see Bible videos from section 1)
- Flights of Fancy: remember that archetypes can often be layered (like a parfait), so we can get a flight archetype layered with a Greek allusion to Icarus - [Toy Story | I will Go Sailing No More HD 720p](#)
- Sex – The two chapters on this subject are pretty self-explanatory. The paradoxical nature of the titles - “It’s All About Sex..” “...Except Sex” will make sense by the end of Chapter 17.

- Baptism (see Bible videos from section 1 and rain video from section 2); also, Foster references the film *Ordinary People*. Take a look at the movie trailer: [Ordinary People Trailer](#)

Section 4

June 22 - June 28: (4 hours) Read and outline chapters 19 – 26 and consider:

- Geography – take a look at this video about how setting becomes a symbolic character in a film <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1K-vq936KjU>
- Seasons – “Winter is coming.” Yes, seasons are more than just seasons. This is a short video with a lady who is into astrology talking about the symbolism of seasons <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NOSUgJTIEZw&t=21s>
- Marks and scars AND blindness – Here’s a funny little video that illustrates how explicit and overt Harry’s scar is and how often it is referred to: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LthAipQiRIE> and then here is a video of the disfigured and blind characters from movies: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TOIMbcIGTDY> Remember to ask yourself WHY they are disfigured and how the marks and scars function symbolically and to characterize them.
- Heart disease and illness – Just go (re)read “The Story of an Hour” by Kate Chopin. Here’s a short video with a reading of it: [“The Story of an Hour” reading \(6 minutes\)](#) You can also think about [Me and Earl and the Dying Girl](#) and [The Fault in Our Stars](#)
- Chapters 25-26 are pretty self-explanatory with regards to entering the world of a text, and respecting irony. Go ahead and leave Chapter 27 alone - for now. (And if you’re one of those people who just can’t leave a thing like that alone? Go ahead, but keep your ideas to yourself until we all get to meet up in August.)

Happy reading, and don’t forget to submit your completed outline on eCampus, or bring a physical copy of it, by the first day of school.

If you need to contact me over the summer, I can be reached at finnegka@myscps.us or via our class 2021-22 GroupMe to access updates, words of encouragement, announcements, and the occasional literary meme. Here’s the link: https://groupme.com/join_group/68421509/JnNeoyo2

I’m looking forward to meeting you all in August!