

**Advanced Placement English: Literature & Composition**  
**2015 Summer Reading Assignment**  
**Hampton High School**

Welcome to Advanced Placement Literature & Composition! As a student in this course, you will engage in the careful reading of major literary works. Through close reading, analysis, and reflection, you will sharpen your awareness of the nuances and devices of language and literature, as well as your understanding of the writer's craft. You will develop critical standards for evaluating and appreciating any literary work, while also increasing your sensitivity to literature as a shared human experience. The course presupposes writing efficiency but will focus on improving critical analysis and will include a study of vocabulary, grammar, mechanics, and usage to improve writing ability in preparation for college next year. In order to achieve these goals and to begin the 2015 school year on a positive note, complete the following assignments. **Please note that summer reading assignments are due on the first day of school.**

**Assignment I: *How to Read Literature like a Professor* by Thomas C. Foster**

Don't be daunted by the title—this is an entertaining and amazingly insightful foray into the meanings of literature beyond the literal.

- Carefully read Foster's book—complete the following writing assignments:

**(Adapted from Donna Anglin)**

**Introduction: How'd He Do That?**

How do memory, symbol, and pattern affect the reading of literature? How does the recognition of patterns make it easier to read complicated literature? Discuss a time when your appreciation of a literary work was enhanced by understanding symbol or pattern.

**Chapter 1 -- Every Trip Is a Quest (Except When It's Not)**

List the five aspects of the QUEST and then apply them to something you have read (or viewed) in the form used on pages 3-5.

**Chapter 2 -- Nice to Eat with You: Acts of Communion**

Choose a meal from a literary work and apply the ideas of Chapter 2 to this literary depiction.

**Chapter 3: --Nice to Eat You: Acts of Vampires**

What are the essentials of the Vampire story? Apply this to a literary work you have read or viewed.

**Chapter 4 -- If It's Square, It's a Sonnet**

Select three sonnets and show which form they are. Discuss how their content reflects the form. (Submit copies of the sonnets, marked to show your analysis).

**Chapter 5 --Now, Where Have I Seen Her Before?**

Define intertextuality. Discuss three examples that have helped you in reading specific works.

**Chapter 6 -- When in Doubt, It's from Shakespeare...**

Discuss a work that you are familiar with that alludes to or reflects Shakespeare. Show how the author uses this connection thematically. Read pages 44-46 carefully. In these pages, Foster shows how Fugard reflects Shakespeare through both plot and theme. In your discussion, focus on theme.

### **Chapter 7 -- ...Or the Bible**

Read "Araby" (available online). Discuss Biblical allusions that Foster does not mention. Look at the example of the "two great jars." Be creative and imaginative in these connections.

### **Chapter 8 -- Hansel and Gretel**

Think of a work of literature that reflects a fairy tale. Discuss the parallels. Does it create irony or deepen appreciation?

### **Chapter 9 -- It's Greek to Me**

Write a free verse poem derived or inspired by characters or situations from Greek mythology. Be prepared to share your poem with the class. Note that there are extensive links to classical mythology on my Classics page.

### **Chapter 10 -- It's More Than Just Rain or Snow**

Discuss the importance of weather in a specific literary work, not in terms of plot.

### **Interlude -- Does He Mean That**

### **Chapter 11 --...More Than It's Gonna Hurt You: Concerning Violence**

Present examples of the two kinds of violence found in literature. Show how the effects are different.

### **Chapter 12 -- Is That a Symbol?**

Use the process described on page 106 and investigate the symbolism of the fence in "Araby." (Mangan's sister stands behind it.)

### **Chapter 13 -- It's All Political**

Assume that Foster is right and "it is all political." Use his criteria to show that one of the major works assigned to you as a freshman is political.

### **Chapter 14 -- Yes, She's a Christ Figure, Too**

Apply the criteria on page 119 to a major character in a significant literary work. Try to choose a character that will have many matches. This is a particularly apt tool for analyzing film -- for example, *Star Wars*, *Cool Hand Luke*, *Excalibur*, *Malcolm X*, *Braveheart*, *Spartacus*, *Gladiator* and *Ben-Hur*.

### **Chapter 15 -- Flights of Fancy**

Select a literary work in which flight signifies escape or freedom. Explain in detail.

### **Chapter 16 -- It's All About Sex...**

#### **Chapter 17 -- ...Except the Sex**

OK ..the sex chapters. The key idea from this chapter is that "scenes in which sex is coded rather than explicit can work at multiple levels and sometimes be more intense than literal depictions" (141). 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.

### **Chapter 18 -- If She Comes Up, It's Baptism**

Think of a "baptism scene" from a significant literary work. How was the character different after the experience? Discuss.

### **Chapter 19 -- Geography Matters...**

Discuss at least four different aspects of a specific literary work that Foster would classify under "geography."

### **Chapter 20 -- ...So Does Season**

Find a poem that mentions a specific season. Then discuss how the poet uses the season in a meaningful, traditional, or unusual way. (Submit a copy of the poem with your analysis.)

### **Interlude -- One Story**

Write your own definition for archetype. Then identify an archetypal story and apply it to a literary work with which you are familiar.

### **Chapter 21 -- Marked for Greatness**

Figure out Harry Potter's scar. If you aren't familiar with Harry Potter, select another character with a physical imperfection and analyze its implications for characterization.

### **Chapter 22 -- He's Blind for a Reason, You Know**

### **Chapter 23 -- It's Never Just Heart Disease...**

### **Chapter 24 -- ...And Rarely Just Illness**

Recall two characters who died of a disease in a literary work. Consider how these deaths reflect the "principles governing the use of disease in literature" (215-217). Discuss the effectiveness of the death as related to plot, theme, or symbolism.

### **Chapter 25 -- Don't Read with Your Eyes**

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.

### **Chapter 26 -- Is He Serious? And Other Ironies**

Select an ironic literary work and explain the multi-vocal nature of the irony in the work.

### **Chapter 27 -- A Test Case**

Read "The Garden Party" by Katherine Mansfield, the short story starting on page 245. Complete the exercise on pages 265-266, following the directions exactly. Then compare your writing with the three examples. How did you do? What does the essay that follows comparing Laura with Persephone add to your appreciation of Mansfield's story?

### **Envoi**

Choose a motif not discussed in this book (as the horse reference on page 280) and note its appearance in three or four different works. What does this idea seem to signify?

## Assignment II: Contemporary Novel

- Select a novel from the list below and read it. As you read, take notes on literary elements from Foster's *How to Read Literature Like a Professor* that you notice.
- Specifically, select **three** concepts/chapters from Foster's book and analyze how each concept (motif, symbol, etc.) develops your novel's theme(s); for this you will write a cohesive, organized, meaningful analysis. This paper (covering all 3 literary elements) should be between 2 and 3 typed pages; **be sure to adhere to MLA style requirements.**

### Independent Novel List

Thoughtfully select and read **one novel** from the list below:

*Song of Solomon*  
*The Joy Luck Club*  
*Things Fall Apart*  
*The Woman Warrior*  
*Pride and Prejudice*  
*The Kite Runner*  
*Blood Meridian*  
*The Color of Water*  
*Climbing the Stairs*

Toni Morrison  
Amy Tan  
Chinua Achebe  
Maxine Hong Kingston  
Jane Austen  
Khaled Hosseini  
Cormac McCarthy  
James McBride  
Padma Venkatraman

- In addition, as you read the novel, **annotate and write commentary** about specific, meaningful examples of the following in your novel:
  1. language & style: quotes/passages that typify/establish narrative style, point of view, diction, syntax, tone, and attitude (focus on irony)
  2. figurative language (metaphor, simile, personification, hyperbole)
  3. symbols & motifs
  4. imagery
  5. characterization

You are expected to identify (highlight or underline) each literary feature above AND make notes on each in your book's margins. What is the effect of each occurrence? For example: Does a specific use of simile enhance characterization? If so, in what way? Be specific. I will be collecting your novel and grading it during class. Be sure to annotate **at least 2 literary features** per chapter. You are expected to have representative samples of these features (overall). Your annotations will be evaluated for accuracy (of identification), quantity, and quality.

### **Assignment III: Independent Play Study**

Read **one** of the plays below:

*Fences* by August Wilson

*The Importance of Being Earnest* by Oscar Wilde

Create a visual representation that depicts a key moment of irony in the play (situational, dramatic, or verbal). This representation could be a collage, drawing, painting, etc. On the back of the visual, tape your typed reflection on how the scene/moment depicted reflects irony (be specific); this analysis should be about 300 words and should relate how the ironic moment contributes to the satirical nature of the play as a whole.

Size: letter size paper to ½ poster board

Please think very carefully about your commitment to the AP English program. By its very nature, AP English involves regular, college-level doses of reading and writing. All work is expected to reflect high levels of scholarship; no late work will be accepted without penalty.

**If ANY of your work is plagiarized, then you will receive a zero on the assignment, your parents and the administration will be notified, and you may be removed from this course. Remember—your honor, your integrity, and your character are your most valuable assets.**

Enjoy your summer reading! The books and plays are truly outstanding, and I believe that you will find them engaging. If you have any questions regarding your essay or any other summer reading assignment, please feel free to email me at:

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