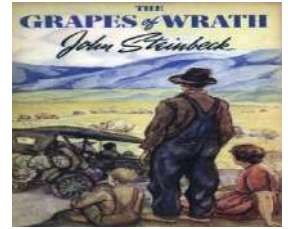


**Summer Reading and Writing Assignment 2016**  
**Honors American Literature**  
**Ms. Brayboy**  
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### Required Reading Overview

Students taking Honors American Literature are required to read **John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath*** over the summer. Students are able to check out the novel from any library but are encouraged to purchase their own copies as well as other novels which we will read during the course. The book is also available online using the following link: chrome extension://mloajfnmjckfjbeefcdacbelnbliden/http://nisbah.com/summer\_reading/grapes\_of\_wrath\_john\_steinbeck2.pdf

This summer reading and writing assignment is due on the **first day of school which is Monday, August 1, 2016.**

### Rationale

One concept central to literary analysis is that all writing is in some way an argument. Some writers and scholars contend that, in fact, "everything is an argument." Working together, will broaden and deeper our understanding of this idea in the class. You will begin the summer before the class by reading ***The Grapes of Wrath*** and thinking about two essential questions:

1. **In what way is this novel "an argument"?**
2. **What/who is the book arguing for and/or about?**

### The Assignment

#### A. Read and Respond

Read ***The Grapes of Wrath*** and answer each of the discussion questions. These discussion questions need to be at least one paragraph (5—7 sentences) which includes citing textual evidence (at least one quote which includes the author's name and page number) in each paragraph. You may keep your responses in either a folder or spiral notebook. All assignments need to be handwritten in either blue/black ink. Also, this assignment needs to be written in MLA format including the heading as well. Answer the essential questions as you read and these may be the last questions that you answer after your discussion questions. **You should have a total of 20 responses.** Purdue Owl website for MLA Format: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>

#### Discussion Questions

1. In the beginning, each character has personal reasons for wanting to go to California. In what ways does each individual's goal change? Which people grow to see a larger purpose in life? What factors contribute to their changes?
2. Why does Steinbeck weave general chapters—often called "interchapters"—with the Joad story? Is the alternation consistent, or are there deviations?
3. The turtle in Chapter 3 is often interpreted as a parable or symbol. What do you think?
4. In prison, Tom "learned to write nice as hell." Meanwhile, Casy leaves the pulpit to "hear the poetry of folks talkin'." How does Steinbeck strike a balance between the more metaphorical, image-laden prose of "birds an' stuff" and "the poetry of folks talking"?
5. Casy says, "I ain't preachin'. Preachin' is tellin' folks stuff. I'm askin' 'em." Do you feel Steinbeck is doing either in *The Grapes of Wrath*?
6. According to statements made in this novel, of what importance is anger in overcoming fear? What must be done with anger in order to make it productive? Do you agree or disagree with that philosophy as expressed in this novel?
7. At which points in the book does the power in the family gradually shift from Pa to Ma?
8. Where do Grandpa and then Grandma die? What might this suggest about where they ultimately do or don't belong?
9. What enduring piece of American writing does Ma's line—"Why, we're the people"—remind you of? How could this be ironic?

10. In what ways is your definition of the term family similar to the meaning Ma Joad gives to the term? In what ways is Ma Joad's meaning different? What do the implications of her meaning contribute to the author's message in the novel?
11. As Casy goes to jail, "On his lips there was a faint smile and on his face a curious look of conquest." And in the novel's last sentence, Rosasharn's "lips came together and smiled mysteriously." Why do both characters leave the novel with a smile?
12. Steinbeck is known for creating some of the most memorable friendships in American literature. How does Casy serve as a role model for Tom Joad, and Ma Joad for Rosasharn?
13. The heroes of *The Grapes of Wrath* are on the bottom end of the social ladder, their language is often vile, their behavior is sometimes as coarse as their language, and they freely discuss bodily functions (which in the 1930s were seldom mentioned in literature). What was Steinbeck's purpose in portraying such unrefined and coarse people? What would be the effect on readers if the Joads spoke "proper" English and did not curse?
14. Steinbeck wrote to his editor about this novel: "I've done my damndest to rip a reader's nerves to rags, I don't want him satisfied." Did he succeed in doing that to you? If so, how did he accomplish it? If not, why weren't you affected in that way?  
What is the effect of the chapters which come between the narrative about the Joads? How would the elimination of those chapters affect the meaning and impact of the novel?
15. Some critics maintain that this novel promotes hatred between classes of people. In what ways does it do that? In what ways does the novel's effect go beyond that?
16. Describe the role women play throughout this novel. Be sure to comment on the significance of Rose of Sharon's final act in the novel.
17. Explain how Tom's imprisonment affected the way he behaved during the journey and throughout his search for work in California.
18. Why do you think this novel continues to have such wide, popular appeal? Is its message still relevant today?

Sources: The Big Read and The Penguin-Signet Classics

### B. Unfamiliar Terms and/or Phrases

Due to the rigor of this course, there will be increased word power and vocabulary as an emphasis in this class, you will **identify at least twenty-five new words as you read this novel**. Please do this by **writing the word, page number, the phrase or sentence where you found it**, and an appropriate definition from a dictionary.

### C. Literary Terms

**Define the following terms and provide an example of term as it is depicted in the novel.** An important aspect of your analysis and participation in discussion is the acquisition and knowledge of literary terms. Literary Terms website: <http://www.oxfordreference.com/>

Allegory

Alliteration

Allusion

Ambiguity

Analogy

Aphorism

Connotation

Creation Myth

Denotation

Dialect

Exposition

Frame Story

Hyperbole

Inverted Syntax

Paradox

Parallelism

Parody

Satire  
Understatement  
Universal Theme

#### D. *The Grapes of Wrath* Unit Test

There will be a reading test over the novel during the first week of school. Also, there will be a test over the literary terms during the first week of school.

#### Other Reading

Students are urged to read this summer. A minimum of five books in addition to *The Grapes of Wrath* is a good target. The theme which will be primarily focused on in class and on this list is the American dream. Please see recommended list on this page.

**Titles do not necessarily follow chronological order; some are placed in categories thematically. ALSO...**

\*\*\*\*<http://www.gadoe.org/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/Curriculum-and-Instruction/Pages/Georgia-Summer-Reading-Challenge.aspx>\*\*\*\*

#### ERA 1: COLONIAL TO MID-19TH CENTURY (*Colonial, Revolutionary, Romantics*)

Cooper, James Fenimore – *The Last of the Mohicans*  
Franklin, Benjamin – *Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin*  
Franklin  
Hawthorne, Nathaniel – *The House of Seven Gables, The Scarlet Letter*  
Melville, Herman – *Moby Dick, Billy Budd*  
Mitchner, James – *Chesapeake, Centennial, Hawaii*  
Thoreau, Henry D. – *Walden*  
Vidal, Gore – *Burr* (biography)

#### ERA 2: CIVIL WAR & 19TH CENTURY RACE RELATIONS

Brown, Dee – *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee*  
Crane, Stephen – *The Red Badge of Courage*  
Frazier, Charles – *Cold Mountain*  
Haley, Alex – *Roots*  
Morrison, Toni – *Beloved* \*\*WILL BE READ IN CLASS  
Stowe, Harriet Beecher – *Uncle Tom's Cabin*  
Vidal, Gore – *Lincoln* (biography)  
Welch, James – *Fools Crow*  
Shaara, Michael – *The Killer Angels*

#### ERA 3: LATER 19TH CENTURY (*Post-Civil War, Westward Movement, Industrial Age*)

Ambrose, Stephen – *Undaunted Courage* (nonfiction)  
Cather, Willa – *O Pioneers!, My Antonia*  
Clark, Walter van Tilburg – *The Oxbow Incident*  
Dreiser, Theodore – *Sister Carrie, An American Tragedy*  
James, Henry – *Portrait of a Lady, Washington Square, The Ambassadors*  
Kate Chopin – *The Awakening*  
Twain, Mark – *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*  
Wharton, Edith – *The House of Mirth, The Age of Innocence, Ethan Frome*

#### ERA 4: EARLY 20TH CENTURY (*Early Modernism, 1900 to WWII*)

Faulkner, William – *The Sound and the Fury*  
Dos Passos, John – *Three Soldiers*  
Hemingway, Ernest – *The Sun Also Rises, For Whom the Bell Tolls, A Farewell to Arms*  
Lewis, Sinclair – *Babbitt, Arrowsmith*  
Morrison, Toni – *The Bluest Eye, Jazz*  
Potok, Chaim – *The Chosen*  
Sinclair, Upton – *The Jungle*  
Smith, Betty – *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn*  
Steinbeck, John – *Of Mice and Men, East of Eden, Cannery Row*  
Baldwin, James – *Go Tell It on the Mountain*  
Walker, Alice – *The Color Purple*  
Hughes, Langston – *Not without Laughter*  
O'Connor, Flannery – *Wise Blood*  
Johnson, James Weldon – *The Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man*  
Larsen, Nella – *Quicksand, Passing*  
Thurman, Wallace – *The Blacker the Berry*

#### ERA 5: WW II & Later 20TH CENTURY & Post-Modern

Branch, Taylor – *Pillar of Fire* (nonfiction, civil rights)  
Capote, Truman – *In Cold Blood* (nonfiction)  
Dillard, Annie – *An American Childhood*  
Ellison, Ralph – *Invisible Man*  
Gaines, Ernest – *A Lesson before Dying*  
Haley, Alex – *Autobiography of Malcom X*  
Heller, Joseph – *Catch 22*  
Keillor, Garrison – *Lake Woebegon Days*  
Kesey, Ken – *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*  
Lee, Harper – *To Kill a Mockingbird*  
O'Brien, Tim – *The Things They Carried*  
Plath, Sylvia – *The Bell Jar*  
Salinger, J.D. – *The Catcher in the Rye*  
Warren, Robert Penn – *All the King's Men*  
Wright, Richard – *Native Son*  
McCarthy, Cormac – *All the Pretty Horses*  
Jones, Edward P. – *The Known World*  
Bryson, Bill – *A Walk in the Woods* (nonfiction)  
Delillo, Don – *White Noise*