

AP ENGLISH IV SUMMER READING AND WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

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Online discussion board: www.nicenet.org
Class name: Class of 11 AP English Lit

"Every book has a soul. The soul of the person who wrote it and of those who read it and lived and dreamed with it. Every time a book changes hands, every time someone runs his eyes down its pages, its spirit grows and strengthens."

-- from *The Shadow of the Wind* by Carlos Ruiz Zafon

Welcome to AP English IV!

Congratulations! You have made a wise and important decision in your high school career. By enrolling in Kingsway's AP English Literature course, you have committed yourself to:

- ✓ learning to read literature more closely than ever before
- ✓ writing more clearly and learning to take risks in your writing
- ✓ thinking more deeply and more critically about the words on a page and the world around you and within you

I look forward to getting to know you in September. Together, we will experience the immense power and meaning of great literary works. We will travel to new places, meet unforgettable characters and writers, share and discuss a multitude of thoughts about human nature, and most importantly, grow intellectually and emotionally through this process.

Our journey begins this summer with your assigned reading, an accompanying assignment and essay, and participation in online discussion.

Your reading assignments are:

1. *How to Read Literature Like a Professor* by Thomas Foster
2. *Lord of the Flies*, a novel by William Golding
3. One contemporary novel from the list that follows

Your writing assignments are:

1. The attached assignment that will "guide" you through *How to Read Literature* and require you to reflect on the reading you have done (or films that you have viewed) prior to this course. All responses should be written in the marble composition book I provided you. (Poems should either be re-written there or printed out and glued/stapled onto the pages.)

2. An essay in response to the writing prompt that follows. *Due at the beginning of our first class in September.*

How to approach these assignments:

How to Read Literature (HTRLLAP) by Thomas Foster

This is the most time-intensive part of your AP summer work. There are 27 chapters in this very readable book about how to become a “close reader.” The attached assignment follows the book chapter by chapter. My suggestion? Do not leave this assignment off until the last week of August. You will be burning the midnight oil to finish before school starts. Instead, work through the reading and assignment by pacing yourself a few chapters each week. 27 chapters/10 weeks—you do the math. I will be collecting your completed assignment on the first day back in September. Use the marble composition book for these responses. Please do not hand in your first assignment late. (Take care of this composition book...it will get plenty of use throughout the year.)

Lord of the Flies by William Golding

Do not let Golding’s descriptive writing style discourage you. After the first few chapters, you will find yourself immersed in an engaging story about what would happen if young boys were stranded on an island with no adult authority. Please note that a few of your Foster journal prompts are related to this novel. I would also like you to “annotate” the text with post-it notes. Note any questions, thoughts, insights as you read on post-it notes or use the notes to mark specific quotes. I will review your “annotated” text in September. After class discussion, you will be writing an in-class essay about this novel. (I would suggest that you not begin reading this novel until August so that it is fresh in your mind during the first days of class. As you read, return to the Foster journal prompts to respond to those questions.)

Online discussion

By now, each of you should have “enrolled” in the Class of 11 AP English Lit group at www.nicenet.org. There are two questions that require your online response over the summer. These are related to *How to Read Literature*. See the questions and response deadlines below. This is an informal forum and you are welcome to add your thoughts/ideas more than once. I will chime in on occasion to energize and extend your discussion points. At least one “post” is required from *each* student for *each* question.

Short essay

On the first day of class, you should hand in a typed (12 pt. double-spaced) essay (two pages minimum/three page maximum) that responds to the following writing prompt about the contemporary novel you chose to read:

In reading fiction we share the imaginative vision of another, adopting, however briefly, his or her way of perceiving the world. Through reading a wide variety of stories we can enter many different imaginative worlds, in the process enlarging and deepening our own perception of the world.

Read a contemporary novel from the provided list. In a well-organized essay, discuss how that fictional work “enlarged and deepened your own perception of the world.”

Remember, I am your audience. I do not need to know the details of the plot, descriptions of characters or setting, or the literary elements used by the author. What I want to know is how that piece of fiction affected you~and why.

Contemporary Novel List

Choose one for your essay but feel free to read as many as you wish. I highly recommend ALL of these novels.

Kite Runner by Khaled Hosseini
A Prayer for Owen Meany by John Irving
Song of Solomon by Toni Morrison
Poisonwood Bible by Barbara Kingsolver
The Book Thief by Marcus Zusak

All of these novels are available at your local library or at any Barnes & Noble or Borders. Or...you may borrow my copy...just be sure to see me soon!

“Extracurricular” reading

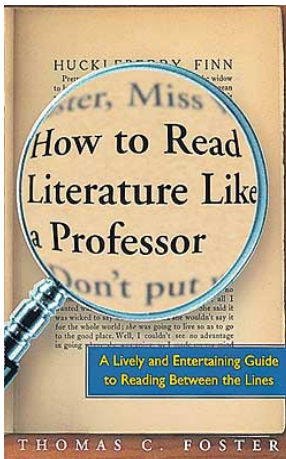
If you have the time and inclination for more reading this summer, I have many recommendations. Take a look at the list below or email me and let me know what type of books you like to read. I'll respond with some suggestions.

Some of Mrs. Carpenter's Favorites

On Writing by Stephen King
The Road by Cormac McCarthy
A Thousand Acres by Jane Smiley (a modern adaptation of King Lear)
The Color Purple by Alice Walker
Old School by Tobias Wolff
A Thousand Splendid Suns by Khaled Hosseini
Fasting, Feasting by Anita Desai
Middlesex by Jeffrey Eugenides
Anna Karenina by Leo Tolstoy (I read this in high school)
An American Tragedy by Theodore Dreiser (Also read in high school)
Crime and Punishment by Fyodor Dostoyevsky (Reading this giant classic is an amazing accomplishment...and I read it for the first time with my students in 2007!)
Almost anything by D.H. Lawrence

And I could go on and on...we will never be at a loss for reading good literature.

“Want to be a better writer? Become a better reader.”



How to Read Literature Like a Professor: A Lively and Entertaining Guide to Reading Between the Lines by Thomas C. Foster

In Arthur Conan Doyle's "The Red-Headed League," Sherlock Holmes and Dr. John Watson both observe Jabez Wilson carefully, yet their differing interpretations of the same details reveal the difference between a "Good Reader" and a "Bad Reader." Watson can only describe what he sees; Holmes has the knowledge to interpret what he sees, to draw conclusions, and to solve the mystery.

Understanding literature need not be a mystery -- Thomas Foster's book will help transform you from a naive, sometimes confused Watson to an insightful, literary Holmes. Professors and other informed readers see symbols, archetypes, and patterns because those things are there -- if you have learned to look for them. As Foster says, you learn to recognize the literary conventions the "same way you get to Carnegie Hall. Practice." (xiv).

Note to students: These short writing assignments will help you practice your literary analysis and they will help me get to know you and your literary tastes. Whenever I ask for an example from literature, you may use short stories, novels, plays, or films (yes, film is a literary genre). If your literary repertoire is thin and undeveloped, use the book's Appendix to jog your memory or to select additional works to explore. At the very least, watch some of the "Movies to Read" that are listed on pages 293-294. **Please note that your responses should be paragraphs -- not pages! Each entry should start on a fresh page. All responses should be recorded in the marbled composition book that I provided you. This composition book will be used repeatedly throughout the year. This is just the beginning...**

Even though this is analytical writing, you may use "I" if you deem it important to do so; remember, however, that most uses of "I" are just padding. For example, "I think the wolf is the most important character in 'Little Red Riding Hood'" is padded. As you compose each written response, re-phrase the prompt as part of your answer. In other words, I should be able to tell which question you are answering without referring back to the prompts.

Concerning mechanics, pay special attention to pronouns. Make antecedents clear. Say Foster first; not "he." Remember to capitalize and punctuate titles properly for each genre.

Do not be overwhelmed by this assignment! View it as an introduction to the course. If you pace yourself (a few chapters each week, for example), you will be fine. Be aware of the two online due dates: **July 15** and **August 16**. If you will be away and without computer access, be sure to post your responses before you leave.

YOUR ASSIGNMENT: CHAPTER BY CHAPTER

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). Where to find sonnets? Try these online resources or skim the poetry books at Barnes & Noble or at a library.

Shakespearean sonnets at [www.shakespeare-online.com/sonnets/Sonnet Central](http://www.shakespeare-online.com/sonnets/Sonnet%20Central) at www.sonnets.org where I would recommend John Donne ("Death be not proud" is one of my favorites and one we will study this year: www.sonnets.org/donne.htm#110) or William Wordsworth ("The world is too much with us" is another favorite: www.sonnets.org/wordsworth.htm#050). And take a look at some modern sonnets (www.poets.org).

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

Many critics compare aspects of the setting in *Lord of the Flies* to the Garden of Eden. Read a print or online version of Genesis, Chapters 2 and 3 in the Bible (www.bibleontheweb.com is a good source). What comparisons can you draw between the two stories or between their settings? *Note: Do not worry if you haven't read Lord of the Flies yet. Just make a chapter heading on the next blank page in your journal, leave the page blank and come back to answer the question in August.*

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. Need some help or a memory refresher on Greek mythology? Try these sites: <http://web.uvic.ca/grs/bowman/myth/index.html> or www.pantheon.org or www.mythweb.com

IMPORTANT~THIS NEXT ONE IS AN ONLINE POST. Your response to this chapter should be posted at www.nicenet.org no later than Thursday, July 15 at 10 PM

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 either the conch or Piggy's glasses in *Lord of the Flies*.

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 since you've been at Kingsway 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...see suggested websites for chapter 4—or visit a library or bookstore.)

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.

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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 20th century. Contrast how it could be viewed by a reader from the 21st 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 multivocal 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?

If you have questions, please email me during the summer at donnaocarpenter@aol.com.

Do not hesitate to do so! This assignment will be collected on our first day of class.

I am available by email most of the summer.

Adapted from assignments originally developed by Donna Anglin and Sandra Effinger.