

Summer Reading Guidelines

AP English Literature and Composition

Mrs. Yale

According to the College Board, “Reading in an AP course is both wide and deep.” In other words, students should be exposed to literature that covers a variety of genres and time periods; however, in addition to having a wide reading repertoire, the AP student should also know several works in depth, reading them meticulously and deliberately. The College Board also says, “Such close reading involves the *experience* of literature, the *interpretation* of literature, and the *evaluation* of literature.”

Two Required Texts:

1. ***How to Read Literature like a Professor: A Lively and Entertaining Guide to Reading between the Lines*** In an easy-to-read style, Thomas Forster, an English Professor at University of Michigan, introduces students to literary analysis. He explains some of the conventions that authors use in their writing and that students will come across in their reading
2. ***Wuthering Heights*** by Charlotte Bronte

These assignments should be TYPED in 12-font Times New Roman. Hard copies will be submitted on **Wednesday, August 11th** the second day of school. Please keep an electronic copy of your work so that you can have access to the assignments after you turn in the hard copies. These assignments will be your first grades of the first quarter.

Assignments:

1. For ***How to Read Literature like a Professor***, access the following website and complete at least 5 of the assignments listed there by chapter with the exception of Chapters 16, 17, and 27.

<http://homepage.mac.com/mseffie/assignments/professor/professor.html>

2. Following your reading of ***Wuthering Heights***, answer one of the prompts in a well-organized, well-supported essay. The essay should not exceed 750 words (about two typed, double-spaced pages). The year prior to the essay prompt indicates what year the question appeared as an open-ended question on the AP English Literature exam. Please write the year of the prompt you choose to which you have chosen to respond.

1973. An effective literary work does not merely stop or cease; it concludes. In the view of some critics, a work that does not provide the pleasure of significant closure has terminated with an artistic fault. A satisfactory ending is not, however, always conclusive in every sense; significant closure may require the reader to abide with or adjust to ambiguity and uncertainty. In an essay, discuss the ending of a novel or play of acknowledged literary merit. Explain precisely how and why the ending appropriately or inappropriately concludes the work. Do not merely summarize the plot.

1979. Choose a complex and important character in a novel or a play of recognized literary merit who might on the basis of the character's actions alone be considered evil or immoral. In a well-organized essay, explain both how and why the full presentation of the character in the work makes us react more sympathetically than we otherwise might. Avoid plot summary.

1990. Choose a novel or play that depicts a conflict between a parent (or a parental figure) and a son or daughter. Write an essay in which you analyze the sources of the conflict and explain how the conflict contributes to the meaning of the work. Avoid plot summary.

2001. One definition of madness is "mental delusion or the eccentric behavior arising from it." But Emily Dickinson wrote

Much madness is divinest Sense-
To a discerning Eye-

Novelists and playwrights have often seen madness with a "discerning Eye." Select a novel or play in which a character's apparent madness or irrational behavior plays an important role. Then write a well-organized essay in which you explain what this delusion or eccentric behavior consists of and how it might be judged reasonable. Explain the significance of the "madness" to the work as a whole. Do not merely summarize the plot.

2003. According to critic Northrop Frye, "Tragic heroes are so much the highest points in their human landscape that they seem the inevitable conductors of the power about them, great trees more likely to be struck by lightning than a clump of grass. Conductors may of course be instruments as well as victims of the divisive lightning." Select a novel or play in which a tragic figure functions as an instrument of the suffering of others. Then write an essay in which you explain how the suffering brought upon others by that figure contributes to the tragic vision of the work as a whole.

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