AP Literature and Composition
Summer Reading
Miss Ricci

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(Use this email address to ask any questions you may have along the way.).

Welcome to senior year and to AP Literature and Composition! The focus of this college course will be preparing you for the AP test in May, through literary analysis and sample tests, frequent discussions, group activities, projects, etc. Your summer reading is a sampling of the kinds of activities and readings we will encounter this year. I’d like to tell you a bit about what to expect:

1. This is a literature class, so you must be willing to read the assigned novels and plays. Reading just a part of the book or just reading study aids like SparkNotes will not prepare you for college nor for the AP test. If you don’t like to read, analyze, discuss, work with others, write essays, and be creative (i.e. write poetry and short stories; complete projects, etc.), this probably isn’t the class for you.
2. A major goal of this class is to prepare you for college. We will work on improving your writing skills, so by the end of the course, you will feel more comfortable about writing for your college classes.
3. We will work on your critical thinking skills through writing and discussion.
4. There will be homework most nights.
5. You will be well-prepared to get college credit by doing well on the AP Literature test next May as long as you actively engage in class activities- especially in our in-depth small and large group discussions.
What is AP Literature?

The guiding questions of this course are simple; they are “What is the author’s purpose?” and (mostly) “Through which techniques do we determine the complexity of meaning in the literature?” We will read and discuss short and long pieces of literature and ask questions such as:

“What does the character act that way?
“How does it affect the author’s purpose?”
“What does the author use this particular image?”
“What is this symbol used? How does it affect the meaning of the work as a whole?”

It is good to find examples of literary devices, tone, etc., but in this class we will discover how these examples affect the meaning of the work as a whole, and how they reveal the author’s purpose. This is literary analysis, and your summer work is an important start to your AP Lit journey, as it sets the tone for what we will embark upon all year.
Summer Reading Assignments:

You will complete each of the following:

A. Designated chapters from How to Read Literature Like a Professor (Revised Edition), by Thomas C. Foster (you will use this in conjunction with one of the literary choices below)

B. Choice of one Classic from the list provided:

Wuthering Heights, Emily Bronte
Heart of Darkness, Joseph Conrad
Pride and Prejudice, Jane Austen
Great Expectations, Charles Dickens
As I Lay Dying, William Faulkner
The Invisible Man, Ralph Ellison
Oedipus Rex, Sophocles
Gulliver’s Travels, Jonathan Swift
Candide, Voltaire
No Exit, John Paul Satre

Shakespearean Choices: Othello, Twelfth Night, MacBeth, or The Merchant of Venice

C. Choice of one Contemporary work from the list provided:

Song of Solomon, Toni Morrison
The Awakening, Kate Chopin
Their Eyes Were Watching God, Zora Neale Hurston
The Nightingale: A Novel, Kristin Hannah
The Nix, Nathan Hill
Native Speaker, Chang-Rae Lee
Portrait of an Artist as a Young Man, James Joyce
1984, George Orwell
Catch-22, Joseph Heller
The Glass Menagerie, Tennessee Williams
The Kite Runner, Khaled Hosseini
(It might help to look at the list of works that have previously been used on the AP Exam in order to help you make a decision as to which works to choose. Some works are used in back to back years, and some haven’t been used in awhile. If the title isn’t there, it’s because it’s a more modern book; the College Board used several modern novels this year, so I included popular titles on our list that may be chosen next year.)

D. 3 poems (attached)
E. Major Works in a Nutshell (attached)

Assignments: You will decide which play or novel you will use for both of the assignments (#’s 1 and 2). You may only use each work once (one needs to be “classic” and the other needs to be “modern”). Everyone will do the same poetry assignment, however. ALL WORK NEEDS TO BE TYPED (unless otherwise indicated) and shared with me via Turnitin.com (Class ID: 18084876, Enrollment Key: BRONCOS19). Each assignment’s rubric (with the exception of one) and weight are located after the directions. Failure to hand in assignments on time, and/or plagiarism of any kind, will result in possible consequences like receiving a zero on the assignment(s); administrative referral, dismissal from the course, etc.

The assignments are as follows (the directions for each are below):

1. Chapters and questions for How to Read Literature Like a Professor, used in conjunction with one of the plays or novels. (Due July 13th by 11:59PM)
2. Literary Analysis Journal (due August 17th by 11:59PM)
3. Poetry Analysis (due on the first day of school...please print it out)
4. Major Works in a Nutshell (due on the first day of school...please print it out)

1. How to Read Literature Like a Professor (Revised Edition). (Due July 13th)

Directions: Read chapters 1, 9, 10, 14, 18, 21, 24 and 25. Using quotations from both texts – How to Read Literature... and one of your novels (or the play)– answer FIVE of the questions below that relate best to your chosen work. This should be a well-written discussion of the message Foster is expressing in How to Read Literature Like a Professor, and the message the author is expressing in their novel or play. Each response should be at least two paragraphs in length. Make sure you
Choose 5 of the following questions:

1. **Every Trip is a Quest (Except When it’s Not) (Chapter 1):** In the novel, what is the quest? Choose a character and explain how he/she gains self-knowledge. Look at a modern day example of this:
   [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KGV1BvnyvGo&list=PLeGteHoy9WAisSnoB10kYfw-bzQSCPNE2&index=4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KGV1BvnyvGo&list=PLeGteHoy9WAisSnoB10kYfw-bzQSCPNE2&index=4)

2. **It’s More Than Just Rain or Snow (Chapter 9):**
   Choose a scene where weather or the environment is more than what it seems and explain the significance. Check this out: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uf34E1BZduo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uf34E1BZduo)

3. **Never Stand Next to the Hero (Chapter 10):**
   Explain the difference between round and flat characters. Give an example of a flat and round character and where the title of this chapter applies and how.

4. **Yes, She’s a Christ Figure Too (Chapter 14):**
   Discuss the “Christ Figure” in your novel or play according to the criteria discussed in the chapter. Explain why/how this role and how it is established. This might help:
   [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oggODgb9K2U](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oggODgb9K2U) (part 1)
   [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TfVSikoglw4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TfVSikoglw4) (part 2)

5. **If She Comes Up, It’s Baptism (Chapter 18):**
   Think of a “baptism scene.” How was the character different after the experience? Discuss.

6. **Marked for Greatness (Chapter 21):**
   Who is the hero in the novel? How do you know he/she is the hero? Is there a visible, physical difference between the hero and other characters? Why would this be important?

7. **Don’t Read With Your Eyes (Chapter 24):**
   Choose a quote that reflects the overall meaning of the work. What did you glean from this reading experience?

8. **It’s My Symbol and I’ll Cry if I Want To (Chapter 25)**
Choose a symbol in the book and explain what it means and how it helps establish a theme. This is an interesting short video that hints at the kind of discussions we will have in our search for meaning:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P3c0hD6qvZc

This assignment will be worth a test grade, and will be graded using a rubric.

2. Literary Analysis Journal  (Due August 17th by 11:59PM)

The purpose of the journal is to engage you actively with the reading, so you arrive at a more profound understanding of the reading as you examine the author’s methods to arrive at the complexity of meaning (which is basically what we will be examining all year). You might want to answer some of the questions as you read, then return to them when you finish to add insight or adjust your initial thought. Hence, your entries should avoid plot summary (i.e. retelling of the plot), but rather critical entries that follow the order of your reading. You may organize your journal however you’d like; just be sure to label each entry. Each entry should be at least a paragraph or two in length (unless the question specifies another format). Use textual evidence as much as possible to strengthen your points. This “sticky-note” reading strategy might help with preparing your analysis; it’s not part of the assignment, just strongly recommended. Include the following:

A. What is the theme of the work? (This answer should drive your responses to the rest of the prompts.)
B. Explaining a significant or powerful direct quotation/passage (cite page). (Direct quotations or paraphrasing a specific part of the story should not be longer than about three lines—use ellipsis at the end to indicate the continuation of a direct quotation.) Discuss why you consider it to be “significant or powerful” as it relates to the work as a whole.
C. Describe the setting(s)...location, time period, season, etc. How does this play into the establishing the theme of the work?
D. Which kinds of conflict are present? How does it/they get resolved? What does this reveal about the character(s)?
E. Evaluating literary components of the author’s writing style (i.e. structure, tone, point-of-view, syntax, etc.). How do these components contribute to/reflect the meaning of the work?
F. List major character names and descriptions. Explain how they lead the reader to the theme of the work based on evidence from the text.
G. Provide examples of the author’s use of figurative language (i.e. symbolism, metaphor, mood, personification, imagery, etc.) and discuss how they help in establishing the theme of the work.

H. Relate some key aspects of the novel to real world issues and/or common human experience.

I. Clarify something that confuses you or that you don’t know such as a word or an allusion. (i.e. look it up and present your findings)

J. What is your opinion of the work? What stood out to you? What would you have changed?

This assignment will be worth a test grade, and a rubric will be used to score it collectively.

Academic honesty (i.e. not plagiarizing or reading Cliff Notes/Spark Notes rather than the book) is a fundamental component of your education and your grade.

3. Poetry Analysis:

TPCASTT is a method of analyzing poetry that gives you a guide to work from when you’re trying to figure out what a poem means. It’s an excellent way to “cover the bases”, rather than just asking someone to tell what he/she thinks the poem might mean. Below is a description of what you should analyze in each step.

Directions: Poetry is a large part of AP Literature, and there are many strategies suggested in terms of how to determine the meaning of the poems, by looking at the elements that a poet chooses to utilize. Analyze each of the poems using the TPCASTT method (one of the aforementioned strategies). Print out the poems; annotate them as you analyze: write notes to yourself, underline/highlight key ideas, figures of speech, interesting diction, etc. Record your analysis of each of the components of TPCASTT in a typed outline format. (Due September 5th in class-please print out)

Title: Take a look at the title before you even read the poem. What could it mean? Sometimes, the title is very straightforward – that tells you a great deal about what to expect from the poem. Often, the title is somewhat cryptic in nature. That should tell you something about what to expect, too. (This, obviously won’t be applicable with the Shakespearean sonnet.).

Paraphrase: What is the literal meaning of the poem? It’s difficult to get the figurative meaning of the poem if you can’t figure out the literal meaning. (You may either re-write the lines in your own words, or write a paragraph that summarizes the literal meaning of the poem from the beginning to the end.)
Connotation: This is the most important part of your analysis; it’s where you should demonstrate the most work. What is the implied meaning, and how does the poet convey this meaning? (Hint: It does NOT simply mean “negative” or “positive” connotation.) Sample ideas to look for:

1. Specific diction
2. Syntax
3. Imagery
4. Symbols and Motifs
5. Poetry terms such as metaphor, simile, hyperbole, alliteration, paradox, allusion, rhyme scheme, etc.
6. In short, any literary device used in the poem fits under the connotation category.

Attitude: What is the tone of the poem? Come up with at least two tone words that pinpoint the exact attitude of the poet toward the topic.

Shift (or volta): There is a shift of some sort in nearly every poem written. It might be a shift in tone, in subject matter, in meaning, in rhyme scheme – anything. Look for the shift, and then decide why the poet has a shift in that particular place.

Title: Take another look at the title. What does it mean to you now that you’ve analyzed the poem?

Theme: In a sentence, what is the theme, the poet’s message? In other words, what statement about life is the poet making? Be careful: theme is difficult to nail down, and all too often students put down the subject matter instead of the theme.

The three TPCASTT analyses will be averaged into a quiz grade using a rubric.

#1. “Calm is All Nature as a Resting Wheel” by William Wordsworth

Calm is all nature as a resting wheel.
The kine are couched upon the dewy grass;
The horse alone, seen dimly as I pass,
Is cropping audibly his later meal:
Dark is the ground; a slumber seems to steal
O’er vale, and mountain, and the starless sky.
Now, in this blank of things, a harmony,
Home-felt, and home-created, comes to heal
That grief for which the senses still supply
Fresh food; for only then, when memory
Is hushed, am I at rest. My Friends! restrain
Those busy cares that would allay my pain;
Oh! leave me to myself, nor let me feel
The officious touch that makes me droop again.

# 2- “Woman Work” by Maya Angelou (1928-2014)

I've got the children to tend
The clothes to mend
The floor to mop
The food to shop
Then the chicken to fry
The baby to dry
I got company to feed
The garden to weed
I've got shirts to press
The tots to dress
The can to be cut
I gotta clean up this hut
Then see about the sick
And the cotton to pick.

Shine on me, sunshine
Rain on me, rain
Fall softly, dewdrops
And cool my brow again.

Storm, blow me from here
With your fiercest wind
Let me float across the sky
'Til I can rest again.

Fall gently, snowflakes
Cover me with white
Cold icy kisses and
Let me rest tonight.
Sun, rain, curving sky
Mountain, oceans, leaf and stone
Star shine, moon glow
You're all that I can call my own

#3 “My Papa's Waltz,” by Theodore Roethke

The whiskey on your breath
Could make a small boy dizzy;
But I hung on like death:
Such waltzing was not easy.

We romped until the pans
Slid from the kitchen shelf;
My mother's countenance
Could not unfrown itself.

The hand that held my wrist
Was battered on one knuckle;
At every step you missed
My right ear scraped a buckle.

You beat time on my head
With a palm caked hard by dirt,
Then waltzed me off to bed
Still clinging to your shirt.

4. Major Works in a Nutshell- (Due September 5th in class- please print out)

Think about the epics, plays and novels you've read in English classes from freshman year to junior year; these can be books that were read as a class, or summer reading books. Choose ONE book from each year, and use this data sheet to record the designated information in as much detail as possible for EACH title you choose. Try testing your memory, versus using SparkNotes. This assignment will be used throughout the year (in a variety of forms) to help you recall different works in case they appear in
the title list for the Free Response Question on the AP Exam. Ideally, it would be nice for the class to choose different titles so we can revisit as many works as possible, so please try not to do choose the same works as your friend(s) if this can helped.

(Each will be worth a homework grade)