

To: Members of AP Literature

From: Miss Desilets

Re: Summer Reading for 2011-2012 School Year

Students in AP Literature must complete **four** major reading and writing assignments during summer vacation. This work is particularly intense in order to ensure their commitment to the challenge and the rigor of the course. It is also designed to demonstrate that they possess the prerequisite reading and writing skills for success in the course. Additionally, the summer reading allows students to experience a wider range of text and genres than might otherwise be possible during the school year.

Part I: An Introduction to Critical Reading

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

Thomas C. Foster

“What does it mean when a fictional hero takes a journey? Shares a meal? Gets drenched in a sudden rain shower? Often, there is much more going on in a novel or poem than is readily visible on the surface -- a symbol, maybe, that remains elusive, or an unexpected twist on a character -- and there's that sneaking suspicion that the deeper meaning of a literary text keeps escaping you. In this practical and amusing guide to literature, Thomas C. Foster shows how easy and gratifying it is to unlock those hidden truths, and to discover a world where a road leads to a quest; a shared meal may signify a communion; and rain, whether cleansing or destructive, is never just rain.” (amazon.com)

- ✓ **Assignment:** Choose seven of the following short writing assignments. (Please note that the assignment of Chapter 27 is mandatory – the other six are your choice!) While these questions concentrate on specific chapters of the book, it is very important that you read through the whole book in its entirety, but that you concentrate on the following chapters when reading.

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 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 10 -- It's More Than Just Rain or Snow

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

Chapter 15 -- Flights of Fancy

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

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 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.)

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 multivocal nature of the irony in the work.

Chapter 27 -- A Test Case (MANDATORY)

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?

Note to students: These short writing assignments will let 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 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!**

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 Ridinghood'" 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.

These short writing assignments should be submitted to me by Wednesday, July 20, 2011 via e-mail (desiletsk@bsd-ri.net). (Be sure to include your name in the e-mail text.)

Part II: Shakespeare: Choose one of the following plays and complete the assignment that follows.

Much Ado About Nothing (Comedy)

"Much Ado About Nothing" is the story of Leonato, an Italian nobleman, his daughter, Hero, and his niece, Beatrice. Following a war Leonato welcomes into his house Don Pedro, his good friend; fellow soldiers of Don Pedro, Claudio and Benedick; as well as Don Pedro's illegitimate brother, Don John. Quickly amorous relations develop between Claudio and Hero and later between Benedick and Beatrice. As wedding plans are being made for Claudio and Hero, Don John tricks Claudio into believing that Hero has been unfaithful. The wedding bliss is briefly interrupted until the truth is finally discovered and the play ends in a joyful double wedding." (amazon.com)

Henry VIII (History)

"One of the last plays written by Shakespeare, "Henry VIII" is one of his finest historical dramas. Focusing on the life and times of Henry VIII, one of England's most dynamic rulers, the play examines and dramatizes monarchical life of 16th century England. The plot surrounds the events of King Henry VIII's annulment of his marriage to Katherine of Aragon and engagement to Ann Boleyn. The play portrays the suppression of the protestant reformation and the split of the Anglican and Catholic churches with great valor. In Shakespeare's Henry VIII, religious power and political desire merge, resulting in a splendid historical tale." (amazon.com)

Othello (Tragedy)

"One of the most powerful dramas ever written for the stage, *Othello* is a story of revenge, illusion, passion, mistrust, jealousy, and murder. If in Iago Shakespeare created the most compelling villain in Western literature, in *Othello* and Desdemona he gave us our most tragic and unforgettable lovers." (amazon.com)

✓ **Assignment: Passage Analysis**

Choose 5 passages (10 lines or longer) – one from each act of the play and do a line by line passage analysis (translate each line into modern English. Please include both the passage itself AND your translation.). Then, for each passage chosen complete a written reaction or analysis (one paragraph in length). Examples include a discussion of where this

passage fits in regards to the action of the play, how it aids in the development of the character, or relates to the theme of the work. This assignment must be submitted by **Friday, September 2, 2011**, in class.

Part III: The British Novel (Pre-1900): Choose one of the following novels and complete the assignment that follows for each.

Emma by Jane Austen (1815)

“Beautiful, clever, rich - and single - Emma Woodhouse is perfectly content with her life and sees no need for either love or marriage. Nothing, however, delights her more than interfering in the romantic lives of others. But when she ignores the warnings of her good friend Mr. Knightley and attempts to arrange a suitable match for her protegee Harriet Smith, her carefully laid plans soon unravel and have consequences that she never expected. With its imperfect but charming heroine and its witty and subtle exploration of relationships, "Emma" is often seen as Jane Austen's most flawless work.” (amazon.com)

Jane Eyre by Charlotte Bronte (1847)

“Early responses to **Jane Eyre**, first published in 1847, were mixed. Some held the book to be anti-Christian, others were disturbed by a heroine so proud, self-willed, and essentially unfeminine. The modern reader may well have trouble understanding what all the fuss was about. On the surface a fairly conventional Gothic romance (poor orphan governess is hired by rich, brooding Byronic hero-type), *Jane Eyre* hardly seems the stuff from which revolutions are made. But the story is very much about the nature of human freedom and equality, and if Jane was seen as something of a renegade in nineteenth-century England, it is because her story is that of a woman who struggles for self-definition and determination in a society that too often denies her that right. But self-determination does not mean untrammelled freedom for men or women. Rochester, that thorny masculine beast whom Jane eventually falls for, is a man who sets his own laws and manipulates the lives of those around him; before he can enter into a marriage of equals with Jane he must undergo a spiritual transformation. Should the lesson sound dry, it's not. *Jane Eyre* is full of drama: fires, storms, attempted murder, and a mad wife conveniently stashed away in the attic...--500 Great Books by Women.” (amazon.com)

Oliver Twist by Charles Dickens (1837)

“Thanks to its colorful cast of characters and gritty portrayal of street life in Victorian London, Dickens' *Oliver Twist* has captured readers' hearts for more than 150 years. Today's children will love it too. Oliver, a poor orphan, escapes the miserable workhouse where he was born only to fall into the clutches of a band of pickpockets led by the odious Fagin. Yet no amount of cruelty can destroy his purity...and through his goodness, he finds salvation.” (amazon.com)

Tess of the D'Urbervilles by Thomas Hardy (1891)

“When Tess Durbeyfield is driven by family poverty to claim kinship with the wealthy D'Urbervilles and seek a portion of their family fortune, meeting her 'cousin' Alec proves to be her downfall. A very different man, Angel Clare, seems to offer her love and salvation, but Tess must choose whether to reveal her past or remain silent in the hope of a peaceful future. With its sensitive depiction of the wronged Tess and powerful criticism of social convention, "Tess of the D'Urbervilles" is one of the most moving and poetic of Hardy's novels.” (amazon.com)

✓ **Assignment: Critical Analysis Paper**

As you read the novel, take notes including page numbers of examples or quotes about the dynamic character in the novel. These notes should be typed and handed in with your paper. Write a 5 page critical essay in which you analyze that character. Think about the following: How do they change throughout the course of the novel? What decisions or events cause that change? How does this change effect the events (plot) of the novel as well as what happens to the character? Use quotations from the text (taken from your notes) as evidence to support your ideas. Your essay should be typed in MLA Format. **This essay must be submitted by Wednesday, August 17, 2011 via e-mail. (Be sure to include your name in the e-mail text.)**

Part IV: The Modern British Novel (1900-Present) Choose one of the following novels and complete the assignment that follows for each.

A Passage to India by E. M. Forster (1924)

“When Adela and her elderly companion Mrs Moore arrive in the Indian town of Chandrapore, they quickly feel trapped by its insular and prejudiced British community. Determined to explore the real India', they seek the guidance of the charming and mercurial Dr Aziz, a cultivated Indian Muslim. But a mysterious incident occurs while they are exploring

the Marabar caves with Aziz, and the well-respected doctor soon finds himself at the centre of a scandal that rouses violent passions among both the British and their Indian subjects. A masterly portrait of a society in the grip of imperialism, *A Passage to India* compellingly depicts the fate of individuals caught between the great political and cultural conflicts of the modern world.” (amazon.com)

Goodbye, Mr. Chips by James Hilton (1933)

“Sentimental novel by James Hilton, published serially and in book form in 1934. The work depicts the career of a gentle schoolteacher at an English public school. Arthur Chipping ("Mr. Chips") is a middle-aged bachelor who falls in love with and marries a young woman whom he has met on a mountaineering vacation. They live happily at Brookfield School until her death, only a few years later. Mr. Chips devotes the rest of his life to educating many generations of boys.” (amazon.com)

Mrs. Dalloway by Virginia Wolfe (1925)

“On a June morning in 1923, Clarissa Dalloway is preparing for a party and remembering her past. Elsewhere in London, Septimus Smith is suffering from shell-shock and on the brink of madness. Their days interweave and their lives converge as the party reaches its glittering climax. Here, Virginia Woolf perfected the interior monologue and the novel's lyricism and accessibility have made it one of her most popular works.” (amazon.com)

Haroun and the Sea of Stories by Salman Rushdie (1990)

“The author of *The Satanic Verses* returns with his most humorous and accessible novel yet. This is the story of Haroun, a 12-year-old boy whose father Rashid is the greatest storyteller in a city so sad that it has forgotten its name. When the gift of gab suddenly deserts Rashid, Haroun sets out on an adventure to rescue his print.” (barnesandnoble.com)

✓ **Assignment: Reading Response Journal**

As you read, keep a journal filled with responses to your reading. Do not just summarize the contents of the book. Analyze, interpret, and evaluate the novel. Discuss its major themes. Grapple with the ideas that grow out of your reading. Draw connections to your own experiences, other texts, and/or the wider world. Be sure to identify and write about specific passages/quotations that capture important ideas you encounter in the work. **Your journal must contain a minimum of 10 entries of at least 100 words each and must cover the entire scope of the book, not just one section of it. On Wednesday, September 7, 2011 you will be asked to write an essay in class based upon this book. Your journal entries will be your prewriting and reference material. You will be allowed to use your journal during the assessment. Journals will be collected after the essay and will be part of the grade.** (Journals should be typed in MLA Format)

IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

- 1. ALL WORK ASSIGNMENTS MUST BE ORIGINAL. PLAGERISIM WILL NOT BE TOLERATED AND WILL RESULT IN A ZERO ON THE ASSIGNMENT.**
- 2. The entire summer reading project will constitute two test grades for the first quarter. Late assignments will not be accepted without contact before the due date.**
- 3. Questions and submissions should be sent to desiletsk@bsd-ri.net. I will response to your submission with a received notice. If you do not receive a notice, please check the address and resend your work.**