

2017-2018 PRE-REQUISITE SUMMER READING Advanced Placement Literature & Composition

This year I have assigned a collection of short stories, a novel, and a non-fiction selection. With each work there is an associated assignment to complete. These works will require a close, thoughtful initial reading followed by (at least) re-readings of selected passages throughout. As you read, keep in mind my expectation that you will be spending significantly more time and thought per page assigned than you are most likely used to doing.

There are three books you will need for these assignments: How to Read Literature Like a Professor by Thomas C. Foster, The Things They Carried by Tim O'Brien, and Never Let Me Go by Kazuo Ishiguro. Please obtain your own copies of these books; you can find them at the public library, however, purchasing your own copy will allow you to mark in the margins of the text, which will be helpful as you read and, later on, when you are reviewing and writing about the work.

Please read How to Read Literature Like a Professor first; you should complete the assignments for How to Read Literature Like a Professor, however, **after** you have read the other three selections. The other two works may be read in any order. The assignments should be complete and ready to turn in on the first day of school.

All work (aside from the reading journal) must be according to MLA guidelines: typed, double-spaced, and in eco-friendly 12-point Garamond font (Garamond uses 27% less ink when printed than Times New Roman). All assignments can be submitted through Google Drive. Share your documents with shanson@haywood.k12.nc.us; I prefer you use your school email account.*

*You have a student Google email account and can use Drive to create Docs for all these assignments. Your email address is: [computerlogin]@student.haywood.k12.nc.us. The password is the computer login password (last 4 of your student # + year of birth).

Assignment #1: Introduction to Literary Analysis

In How to Read Literature Like a Professor, Thomas C. Foster explains how to read literary works more deeply. Focusing on theme, symbolism, allusions, intertextuality, and other literary devices, Foster will give you tips on how to be a more analytical reader, an important skill in Advanced Placement Literature and Composition. It will be an excellent reference for us in class throughout the year. Please read the entire text, then choose THREE of the writing prompts below and, in **one-half to one page each**, apply what you have learned in those chapters to either The Things They Carried or Never Let Me Go (**please note that you may skip reading chapters 16 and 17 if they make you feel uncomfortable**).

For assignments #2 and #3 you will be selecting passages and commenting on their significance. This is known as a **dialectical journal**, a conversation a reader has with a text. It is a double-column chart where you copy a key quote in the left-hand column and you add your own commentary about the quote in the right hand column. Your commentary should include your own response to the text and your feelings about what is happening. (Directions and a blank journal template are included at the end of this assignment.)

Assignment #2: Short Story Collection

Read The Things They Carried by Tim O'Brien. The story is about a man's experiences as a soldier in Vietnam and about his re-entry into civilian life in the United States. It is based on O'Brien's experiences in war, though he describes the book as "creative non-fiction."

As a word of caution, you should be aware that there is some offensive language scattered throughout the text. The offensive language communicated the horror and the frustration that O'Brien experienced in war and at home. If you or your family determine that an alternative assignment is necessary, please substitute Dubliners by James Joyce, a collection of stories about ordinary people living in Dublin, Ireland.

As you read The Things They Carried, pick out at least **ten** key passages tied to a major theme in the work and comment on their individual significance to their particular chapter. There are twenty-two chapters (or fifteen stories in Dubliners) so not all chapters need to have a key passage; you may also have more than one passage for an individual chapter, however, do not focus too heavily on one particular chapter.

To help get you started, consider ideas such as silence, warfare, guilt, physical/mental weight, loneliness and isolation, storytelling and memory (for Dubliners, consider themes such as paralysis, religion, death, corruption/contamination, adventurous/romantic longing, or betrayal).

Divide a sheet of paper in half lengthwise. On the left side, put the relevant passages from the collection. On the right side, provide specific commentary explaining exactly how that passage relates to the idea you have selected. Be thorough. At the top of the page, indicate in a word or short phrase the theme. (You may use the sample shown below, create your own, or download the digital version from the school website and adjust it to your needs.)

After you have finished the novel and collected and commented on a substantial number of passages, write a sentence out that sums up the theme more fully. Be sure to express it as a complete thought but do not express this theme as a cliché or any other familiar saying.

Then, in a **page or two**, explain how the passages selected show a unified **theme** or **element** that ties the stories together.

Finally, I want you to come up with the **two** most important questions we should discuss as a class regarding this work. List the questions, along with an explanation of why each question is significant.

Assignment #3: Contemporary Fiction

Read Never Let Me Go by Kazuo Ishiguro.

As you read, consider any major idea in Never Let Me Go, and trace its development through the novel. To help get you started, consider ideas such as fate and free will, art and culture, identity, passivity, dreams/hopes/plans, freedom and confinement, or conformity.

As you read, pick out at least **ten** key passages tied to a major theme in the work and comment on their individual significance to the novel. Just as you did with The Things They Carried, divide a sheet of paper in half lengthwise. On the left side, put the relevant passages from the novel. On the right side, provide specific commentary explaining exactly how that passage relates to the idea you have selected. Be thorough. At the top of the page, indicate in a word or short phrase the theme. (You may use the sample shown below, create your own, or download the digital version from the school website and adjust it to your needs.)

After you have finished the novel and collected and commented on a substantial number of passages, write a sentence out that sums up the theme more fully. Be sure to express it as a complete thought but do not express this theme as a cliché or any other familiar saying.

Then, in a **page or two**, explain how the passages selected show a unified **theme** or **element** that ties the novel together.

Finally, I want you to come up with the **two** most important questions we should discuss as a class regarding this novel. List the questions, along with an explanation of why each question is significant.

Honor Code:

Copy the following statement at the end of your assignments (or on a sheet of paper with your file name and your name if you submit through Google Drive). Then sign and date below the statement.

“I certify that no unauthorized assistance has been received or given in the completion of this work. All work shown is my own.”

If you have any problems or concerns that I can help you with over the summer, you can contact me via e-mail. My e-mail is shanson@haywood.k12.nc.us.

Enjoy your summer and happy reading!

SHanson

Directions for Dialectical Journal:

- Copy the quote that you are responding to completely and accurately.
- Include an internal citation including the author’s name and page number
- Ensure that your response is at least 60 words long
- Work to analyze the writing or comment on the events. DO NOT summarize the plot.
- Choose passages from throughout the text, not just at the beginning or at the end.

Passages (Textual Evidence)	Commentary (Why is this significant? Plot? Character? Setting? Theme? Symbols? Allusions?)
<p>When should you write passages down? When you find:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Details that seem important to you • Effective &/or creative use of imagery or symbolism • Passages that remind you of your own life or something you’ve seen before • Turns in the plot • An interesting or potentially significant quotation • A passage that makes you realize something you hadn’t seen before • Examples of patterns: recurring images, ideas, colors, symbols or motifs. • Passages with confusing language or unfamiliar vocabulary • Events you find surprising or confusing • Passages that illustrate a particular character or setting • Effective use of literary devices • You agree or disagree with something a character says or does • Something relevant about the writer’s style 	<p>In this column reflect upon the passages.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise questions about the beliefs and values implied in the text • Give your personal reactions to the passage, the characters, the situation • Discuss the words, ideas, or actions of the author or character • Tell what it reminds you of from your own experience • Write about what it makes you think or feel • Argue with or speak to the character or author • Compare the text to other characters or novels • Make connections to any themes that are revealed to you • Make connections among passages or sections of the work • Analyze a passage and its relationship to the story as a whole. • Analyze the text for use of literary or rhetorical devices (tone, structure, style, imagery, etc.)

Sample from The Things They Carried

Passages (Textual Evidence)	Commentary (Why is this significant? Plot? Character? Setting? Theme? Symbols? Allusions?)
<p>“They carried like freight trains; they carried it on their backs and shoulders-and for all the ambiguities of Vietnam, all the mysteries and unknowns, there was at least the single abiding certainty that they would never be at a loss for things to carry” (O’Brien 2).</p>	<p>O’Brien chooses to end the first section of the novel with this sentence. He provides excellent visual details of what each soldier in Vietnam would carry for day-to-day fighting. He makes you feel the physical weight of what soldiers have to carry for simple survival. When you combine the emotional weight of loved ones at home, the fear of death, and the responsibility for the men you fight with, with this physical weight, you start to understand what soldiers in Vietnam dealt with every day. This quote sums up the confusion that the men felt about the reasons they were fighting the war, and how they clung to the only certainty - things they had to carry - in a confusing world where normal rules were suspended. (128 words)</p>

Name: _____ Title of Work: _____

Theme:	
Passages (Textual Evidence)	Commentary (Why is this significant? Plot? Character? Setting? Theme? Symbols? Allusions?)

Generalization about the theme: In a few sentences, explain the relationship between the passages above. Ideally, these passages will illustrate an important theme or other facet of the novel.

Writing Assignments for *How to Read Literature Like a Professor*
by Thomas C. Foster
(Prompts adapted from Donna Anglin)

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 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

Read James Joyce's short story "Araby." Discuss Biblical allusions that Foster does not mention. Look at the example of the "two great jars." Be creative and imaginative in these connections.

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. Note that there are extensive links to classical mythology on my Classics page.

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 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 the fence in either "Araby" (Mangan's sister stands behind it) or *Never Let Me Go*.

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 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

Okay... 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 work that mentions a specific season. Then discuss how the author uses the season in a meaningful, traditional, or unusual way.

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

Select a 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 26 -- Is He Serious? And Other Ironies

Select an ironic literary work and explain the multivocal nature of the irony in the work.

Envoi

Choose a motif not discussed in this book (as the horse reference on page 280) and note its appearance in three different works. What does this idea seem to signify?