

## AP Literature & Composition Summer Reading Assignment

Welcome! We're pleased that you decided to take AP Literature & Composition. It is a course designed to foster independence and critical thinking. We encourage you to read frequently and widely and reflect on your reading.

This summer we are asking each of you to read two different types of texts, which we hope will help you start school with a feeling of accomplishment. All of you will read from *How to Read Literature like a Professor*. You will also enjoy reading a novel of your choice from the attached list. This list has been derived from previous AP Literature & Composition tests, from National Council of Teachers of English recommendations, from recommendations of honors instructors, and from our personal experience. Please choose a book you have not read previously.

### Assignment Description:

- After reading a major work from the attached list, you will need to read selections from *How to Read Literature Like a Professor*, making at least THREE connections (in three different chapters) between your chosen novel and this "instruction manual."
- You are not required to read this book in its entirety, but you will need to use the chapter titles in the Table of Contents to guide your reading.
- Ultimately, you will be writing a 2-3 page essay explaining how your selected novel can be interpreted through Thomas C. Foster's "lenses," which are articulated in the chapters of *How to Read Literature Like a Professor*.
- The example paragraph below uses *The Great Gatsby* in order to discuss the many "quests" (from Chapter 1 of *Professor*) detailed in literature:

Thomas C. Foster discusses quests in literature and asserts that "the real reason for a quest is always self-knowledge" (3). This statement is definitely true of Jay Gatsby and his quest for Daisy in *The Great Gatsby*. Gatsby has spent the last five years of his life re-defining himself as the man he believes Daisy wants. Selling grain alcohol illegally and manufacturing counterfeit bonds have allowed him to earn the money he needs to throw extravagant parties at his over-the-top mansion, hoping that Daisy would "wander [in], some night" (Fitzgerald 79). Unfortunately for Gatsby, this quest was futile; "he had committed himself to the following of a grail," and he realizes this too late (149). In fact, it is assumed that Gatsby realized, just prior to his death, that he has lost Daisy forever, and that "he must have felt that he had lost the old warm world, paid a high price for living too long with a single dream" (161). Interestingly, as Foster points out, "more often than not, the quester fails at the stated task," and the outcome is unexpected (3).

This is certainly true for Gatsby as he learns that the purity of his dream cannot exist in the world he lives in. So, while his “quest” may have been for Daisy on the surface, near the end of his life, he realizes that this dream was never attainable, thus “[failing] at the stated task” (Foster 3).

The above example mirrors what one of your paragraphs may look like once you finish your essay. Your essay, in its entirety, should consist of an introduction, a body, and a conclusion. While you are required to connect your novel to at least three of Foster’s chapters, this does not necessarily warrant a five-paragraph essay. The organizational pattern is up to you. However, as evident in the example paragraph, you are required to cite text from both your selected novel, as well as Foster’s *Professor*.

Please refer to the rubric for further information on how your paper will be assessed. Pay special attention to the “**Cohesion**” category. Even though your body paragraphs may have separate focal points, you need to find a way to synthesize this information and “explain the relationship between the ideas and concepts.” This can be done throughout your essay, or perhaps, in the conclusion paragraph.

This assignment is due the first day of class.

## Independent Novel Reading List

You may choose to read any of the titles below. Please choose a novel you have not already read. We suggest you visit a website such as amazon.com to read synopses of the novels below to choose one you are interested in.

1984--Orwell

*Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* – Twain

*All the Light We Cannot See*--Doerr

*Anna Karenina*---Tolstoy

*Beloved*--Morrison

*Black Boy*--Wright

*Catch-22*--Heller

*The Color Purple*--Walker

*Crime and Punishment* –

Dostoevsky

*Ethan Frome* – Wharton

*Farewell to Arms*--Hemingway

*Girl with the Pearl Earring* –

Chevalier

*Going After Cacciato*--O'Brien

*The Goldfinch*--Tartt

*The Grapes of Wrath* – Steinbeck

*Gulliver's Travels*--Swift

*The Handmaid's Tale*--Atwood

*Heart of Darkness*--Conrad

*Jane Eyre*--Brontë

*Jude, the Obscure*--Hardy

*Kite Runner* – Hosseini

*Light in August* – Faulkner

*Lolita* – Nabokov

*Madame Bovary* – Flaubert

*Mrs. Dalloway*--Woolf

*Native Speaker*---Lee

*Never Let Me Go*--Ishiguro

*On the Road*--Kerouac

*A Passage to India*--Forster

*The Picture of Dorian Gray*--Wilde

*The Plague*--Camus

*Portrait of an Artist as a Young Man* – Joyce

*A Prayer for Owen Meany*--Irving

*Pride and Prejudice* – Austen

*The Road* – McCarthy

*Slaughterhouse Five*--Vonnegut

*Tess of the d'Urbervilles*--Hardy

*Things Fall Apart*--Achebe

*Their Eyes Were Watching God* – Hurston

*A Thousand Acres*--Smiley

*Wuthering Heights* – Brontë

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us. Happy reading!

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