

2015 Summer Reading Assignments – AP Literature

Start this assignment early. If you are having difficulty with the assignment, whether comprehending the reading or completing the analysis and/or written work, email me at athomson@johnpaul2chs.org as soon as possible. Emailing me and asking for help is the best way to get the most out of the assignment; it will also help you avoid panicking and help you maintain academic integrity (see my note at the end of this assignment). However, also please do not wait until the last minute to contact me, as I cannot guarantee timely help for you in the last week before school begins. Your assignments will be collected the first week of school; please have them prepared for the first day. I look forward to seeing you soon. God Bless and have a good summer!

My Ántonia, by Willa Cather

Requirements:

1. As you read, you should annotate your novel (to annotate is just to make marks/notes on the text). You can make notes directly onto the text by highlighting and writing in the margins. Or, if you prefer not to write on the text, then you can use something like sticky notes and place them on the pages. As a general rule, you should have at least 1 annotation per page, often with more for scenes that are richer or more in depth parts of the narrative. Possibilities for annotation (all are great, but I have highlighted ones that are more on an AP level – AP students should attempt some of these):

Highlight/Mark in the text:

- Character names and descriptions
- Setting (time, place, environment, weather, etc.)
- Vocabulary words you do not know
- Passages that show and/or connect to a theme in the text
- Passages that show major changes in characters
- Passages that are important and/or central to the text overall
- ***Use a color where the text underneath can still be easily seen, and be careful not to over-highlight! It should draw your attention to specific parts, not fill the page with color.

Write in the margins:

- Summarize chapters or sections so you will remember the basic outline later
- Make predictions about what will occur later in the text, especially if you see something that foreshadows (gives a hint or clue about) future events

- Ask questions about what is going on in the text
- Explain your personal reaction to/opinion of parts of the text
- Make connections to your own life, other literature you have read, media you have seen, or real world events
- Make inferences about the purpose of specific parts included or techniques used by the author
- Make notes/comments about the form and structure of the text (meaning the way the work is arranged, the order of events, the format of the story, the style of narration, point of view, etc.)
- Write about any patterns or repetitions you see in the text, including motifs
- Make comments about the author's style of writing, including diction (word choice) and/or syntax (word order/sentence structure)
- Make comments about the mood (emotional quality or feeling of the work) and/or tone (author or speaker's attitude towards what is going on) of the work
- Make comments on the tools and techniques the author is using including selection of detail, figurative language (simile, metaphor, personification, etc.), imagery (sensory description), etc.
- Comment on any major themes (statements the author is trying to make, or points the author is trying to get across)
- Comment on any symbols (objects, people, places, ideas, etc. that have a concrete meaning but also represents something else, usually abstract)

2. As well, you will create a critical thinking response journal for your novel. You should use your annotations to help you create the journal. **Please type out your journal (use Times New Roman 12 point font with 1 inch margins); include a cover page with your name, my name, and class name. Keep the electronic copy of this assignment saved as well in case I need you to turn it in electronically.** The format for this journal follows below:

CRITICAL THINKING RESPONSE JOURNAL FORMAT:

You will write **five (5)** journal responses that span the entire novel – they should not be just from the beginning or one part of the novel. Each entry should include all numbers below (#1-6) and should be a minimum of one single spaced page or longer excluding #1 (the quote itself). For each entry, make sure that you include all of the following (a response of “I don’t know” or “I don’t have a personal connection/question/etc.” is not acceptable):

1. IMPORTANT QUOTE – 1 that reflects each of these 5 categories: Mood, Tone, Imagery/Figurative Language, Symbol/Symbolism, Theme (for more information on the categories see the underlined bullets in the annotation suggestions):

Choose a quote from the novel that reflects one of the five categories and that you feel is important in some way. Make sure you choose the quote yourself and do not consult other sources to find and/or analyze it. Write out the passage and the page number, and label the quote clearly with the category. Don't forget to put quotation marks around the excerpt and parentheses around the page number!

2. CONTEXT:

Describe the quote's context. What is going on when this quote arises? Who is speaking and listening?

3. EXPLANATION:

Explain how the quote reflects the category you put it in. What qualities of the quote make it fit into the category, and what does the quote show about that category in particular?

4. INFERENCE AND SIGNIFICANCE:

What inferences can you make at this point based on this quotation? Meaning, what educated guesses can you make about what is going on in the quote? What conclusions can you draw from reading between the lines of the quote? What can you see is going on with the characters, mood, tone, setting, plot, etc.? From those inferences, also explain the importance of the quote. Why is this quote important to the work as a whole, or if it is not significant to the work overall, why is it significant to the chapter, part, scene, etc. which it came from?

5. PERSONAL CONNECTION:

In what way do you have or can you see a personal connection to this quotation? How is it applicable to your life? What implications does it have in connection with your sense of your own identity?

6. QUESTIONS:

What question(s) can you ask that spring from this quotation or your reading of the novel at this point? Write any question(s) that you could pose to your peers and/or teacher about this quote.

3. After reading, you will also complete the following writing assignment about your reading:

Choose one character from *My Ántonia* whose psychological or moral traits are shaped by his/her cultural, physical, or geographical surroundings. Then write an organized, multiple paragraph essay in which you analyze how surroundings affect this character and illuminate the meaning of the work as a whole. You should reference specific parts of the text, incorporating well-chosen quotes and examples to help prove your thesis and reasons. Do not merely summarize the plot.

Do your best on the writing assignment. It should be free of any errors and include all requirements. For grading purposes it will be considered as a rough draft, and we will use it in class in connection with your first major writing piece of the year.

An Important Note on Academic Integrity:

Mrs. Thomson's Academic Integrity policy will be applied to these summer assignments. You will not receive credit because you alone did not do all of the work, or you assisted someone else without permission in a specifically individual assignment. Any plagiarism or academic dishonesty will result in receiving a 0 for the assignment that cannot be made up, your parents and administration being notified, and additional administrative action being taken in the form of detention, student/parent conference, suspension, etc.

Using any source(s) in place of reading the book, whether an internet site, a friend, a parent or other family member, a summary, etc. constitutes academic dishonesty. Using any source for textual explanation, answering questions, or textual analysis other than yourself, including an internet site, a friend, a parent or other family member, etc. also constitutes academic dishonesty. While collaboration is useful in many circumstances, this is an individual assignment and you are not allowed to work collaboratively to complete it. Giving answers, information, or materials to another student to complete the assignment also constitutes academic dishonesty, and will be treated according to the same policy.