

2016-2017 PRE-REQUISITE SUMMER READING
Advanced Placement Literature & Composition

This year I have assigned a poem, a collection of short stories, a novel, and a non-fiction selection. With each work there is an associated assignment to complete. Two of these works are short, but they 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, Dubliners by James Joyce, and Never Let Me Go by Kazuo Ishiguro. Please obtain your own copy of How to Read Literature Like a Professor and Never Let Me Go. You may borrow a copy of Dubliners from me, 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 three works may be read in any order. They 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 12-point Garamond font (which uses 27% less ink than Times New Roman—let's be as green as possible).

Assignment #1: Introduction to Literary Analysis

In this 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 “Sunday Morning,” *Dubliners*, or *Never Let Me Go* (**please note that you may skip reading chapters 16 and 17 if they make you feel uncomfortable**).

Assignment #2: Poetry

Read Wallace Stevens' poem “Sunday Morning” (attached). As you read, pick **six** passages throughout the poem (passages can range from a single word to an entire sentence). Comment on the significance of each passage, discussing how the passage uses sound, allusion, repetition, word-choice, syntax, tone, imagery, or any other literary element in order to further the poem's overall meaning.

Divide a sheet of paper in half lengthwise. On the left side, put the relevant passages from the poem. 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 poem and collected and commented on a **six** passages, write a sentence out that sums up the theme (a sustained insight about life that the work offers) 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.

Finally, in **a page or two**, explain the theme of the poem (a sustained insight about life that the work offers).

Assignment #3: Short-Fiction

Read Dubliners by James Joyce, a collection of stories about ordinary people living in Dublin, Ireland. As you read, pick out **ten** key passages tied to a major theme in the work and comment on their individual significance to their particular story. There are fifteen stories so not all stories need to have a key passage; you may also have more than one passage for an individual story, however, do not focus too heavily on one particular story.

Just as you did with “Sunday Morning,” 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.

To help get you started, consider ideas such as paralysis, religion, death, corruption/contamination, adventurous/romantic longing, or betrayal.

Then, in a **page and a half to two page** paper, explain how the ten passages selected all show some unified **theme** or **element** that ties the stories together.

Assignment #4: 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. 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 Dubliners, 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.

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.

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. Then, **in a page or two**, answer one of your questions.

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

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?

“Sunday Morning”

Wallace Stevens

1

Complacencies of the peignoir, and late
Coffee and oranges in a sunny chair,
And the green freedom of a cockatoo
Upon a rug mingle to dissipate
The holy hush of ancient sacrifice. 5
She dreams a little, and she feels the dark
Encroachment of that old catastrophe,
As a calm darkens among water-lights.
The pungent oranges and bright, green wings
Seem things in some procession of the dead, 10
Winding across wide water, without sound.
The day is like wide water, without sound,
Stilled for the passing of her dreaming feet
Over the seas, to silent Palestine,
Dominion of the blood and sepulchre. 15

2

Why should she give her bounty to the dead?
What is divinity if it can come
Only in silent shadows and in dreams?
Shall she not find in comforts of the sun,
In pungent fruit and bright, green wings, or else 20
In any balm or beauty of the earth,
Things to be cherished like the thought of heaven?
Divinity must live within herself:
Passions of rain, or moods in falling snow;
Grievings in loneliness, or unsubdued 25
Elations when the forest blooms; gusty
Emotions on wet roads on autumn nights;
All pleasures and all pains, remembering
The bough of summer and the winter branch.
These are the measures of her soul. 30

3

Jove in the clouds had his inhuman birth.
No mother suckled him, no sweet land gave
Large-mannered motions to his mythy mind.
He moved among us, as a muttering king,
Magnificent, would move among his hinds, 35 hinds = shepherds
Until our blood, commingling, virginal,
With heaven, brought such requital to desire
The very hinds discerned it, in a star.
Shall our blood fail? Or shall it come to be
The blood of paradise? And shall the earth 40

Seem all of paradise that we shall know?
The sky will be much friendlier than now,
A part of labor and a part of pain,
And next in glory to enduring love,
Not this dividing and indifferent blue. 45

4

She says, "I am content when wakened birds,
Before they fly, test the reality
Of misty fields, by their sweet questionings;
But when the birds are gone, and their warm fields
Return no more, where, then, is paradise?" 50
There is not any haunt of prophecy,
Nor any old chimera of the grave,
Neither the golden underground, nor isle
Melodious, where spirits gat them home,
Nor visionary south, nor cloudy palm 55
Remote on heaven's hill, that has endured
As April's green endures; or will endure
Like her remembrance of awakened birds,
Or her desire for June and evening, tipped
By the consummation of the swallow's wings. 60

5

She says, "But in contentment I still feel
The need for some imperishable bliss."
Death is the mother of beauty; hence from her,
Alone, shall come fulfillment to our dreams
And our desires. Although she strews the leaves 65
Of sure obliteration on our paths,
The path sick sorrow took, the many paths
Where triumph rang its brassy phrase, or love
Whispered a little out of tenderness,
She makes the willow shiver in the sun 70
For maidens who were wont to sit and gaze
Upon the grass, relinquished to their feet.
She causes boys to pile new plums and pears
On disregarded plate. The maidens taste
And stray impassioned in the littering leaves. 75

6

Is there no change of death in paradise?
Does ripe fruit never fall? Or do the boughs
Hang always heavy in that perfect sky,
Unchanging, yet so like our perishing earth,
With rivers like our own that seek for seas 80

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.