

AP English Literature - Summer Reading Guide
Northwood High School

Teacher: Carolyn McGee

Email: Carolyn_E_McGee@mcpsmd.org (please email me over the summer with questions!)

All summer reading assignments should be completed and ready to turn in **on the first day of school**. Do not plagiarize from other sources; you will receive a zero if you do, and you will not have the opportunity to re-do the work. **No late work will be accepted. Do your best!**

Part 1: Students should purchase, read, and annotate How to Read Literature Like a Professor by Thomas C. Forster (**Note:** www.half.com sells many books at a nicely discounted price. You might want to check here first for a deal).

Assignment: Choose 10 of the prompts that follow and respond in paragraph form (a couple paragraphs per prompt will suffice). Be sure to read the directions on the prompt page before you begin. Please type your responses. Please note that I do expect you to read the **entire** book, as it will be used in class and at home during first quarter (and referred to throughout the entire year).

Part 2: Read Nine Stories, a collection of short stories, by J.D. Salinger. You can find this book at the library **or**, once again, at www.half.com or another discounted book web site.

Assignment: Choose one of the stories, and examine how a specific literary technique contributes to the meaning of the work as a whole. For example, you may wish to examine symbol for "A Perfect Day for Bananafish," character for "Teddy," or theme for "For Esme with Love and Squalor" (these are just examples). Be sure to use ample textual references in your response. Your essay should be typed, double spaced, in 12-point font, and should be at least three pages in length. Note that I expect you to read all of the stories, as we will be referencing them in class first quarter.

Part 3. Choose a book from the following list:

- a. Charlotte Bronte, Jane Eyre
- b. Kate Chopin, The Awakening
- c. Christopher Marlowe, Doctor Faustus
- d. William Faulkner, The Sound and the Fury
- e. Margaret Atwood, A Handmaid's Tale
- f. John Steinbeck, East of Eden
- g. Henrik Ibsen, *An Enemy of the People*
- h. Ernest Hemingway, A Farewell to Arms
- i. William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*

NOTE: If you have difficulty procuring any of the above texts, please contact me immediately and we can discuss alternative options.

- j. James Joyce, Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man
- k. Nathaniel Hawthorne, Scarlet Letter

Be prepared to complete a writing assignment on the first day of class on the book that you chose.

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

In Arthur Conan Doyle's "The Red-Headed League," Sherlock Holmes and Dr. John Watson both observe Jabez Wilson carefully, yet their differing interpretations of the same details reveal the difference between a "Good Reader" and a "Developing Reader." Watson can only describe what he sees; Holmes has the knowledge to interpret what he sees, to draw conclusions, and to solve the mystery.

Understanding literature need no longer be a mystery -- Thomas Foster's book will help transform you from a naive, sometimes confused Watson to an insightful, literary Holmes. Professors and other informed readers see symbols, archetypes, and patterns because those things are there -- if you have learned to look for them. As Foster says, you learn to recognize the literary conventions the "same way you get to Carnegie Hall. Practice." (xiv).

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). You must use a text or film that has **NOT** been discussed already in the book. 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 (example: book titles should be underlined, while short story titles are in quotations).

NOTE: If you have difficulty procuring any of the above texts, please contact me immediately and we can discuss alternative options.

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, using references (do not need to be quotes) to the text.

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 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 7 -- ...Or the Bible

Read "Araby" (available at <http://fiction.eserver.org/short/araby.html>). 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 -- Hanseldee and Greteldum

Think of a work of literature that reflects a fairy tale. Discuss the parallels. Does it create irony or deepen appreciation?

NOTE: If you have difficulty procuring any of the above texts, please contact me immediately and we can discuss alternative options.

Chapter 9 -- It's Greek to Me

Write a free verse poem derived or inspired by characters or situations from Greek mythology.

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 "Araby." (Mangan's sister stands behind it.)

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 as a student in high school 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

OK ...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.

NOTE: If you have difficulty procuring any of the above texts, please contact me immediately and we can discuss alternative options.

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 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.)

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

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 multi-vocal nature of the irony in the work.

Chapter 27 -- A Test Case

We will complete this together in the first week or two of school, so please don't worry about it for now.

NOTE: If you have difficulty procuring any of the above texts, please contact me immediately and we can discuss alternative options.