

Rockville HS English Department  
Pre-IB English 10  
Summer Reading Assignment

Thoughtful analysis and critical reading are essential for every course in the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme. This summer reading assignment is designed to help you develop these skills in preparation for your work in the program.

**Directions:**

- 1) Read through the “Background Reading” for The Odyssey that has been included in this summer reading assignment packet.
- 2) Read the following work by the first day of school:  
**The Odyssey** by Homer (translation by Fitzgerald)

*-Text can be checked out from the school before the end of the school year, or you may feel free to secure your own copy from a public library or book store.*

*- The Odyssey can be a tough read, but please challenge yourself and read the book in its entirety. **It is not acceptable to substitute your reading of The Odyssey by using SparkNotes or any other similar resource.***

- 3) Complete the following writing assignments in a **marbled composition book** and be prepared to turn in on the first day of school. This notebook will serve as your journal for the year. Avoid using spiral notebooks as they can fall apart. **Handwrite** your responses (do not type). Plan ahead- you will not be able to complete this assignment if you wait until the night before school starts.

**Assignments:** (due on the first day back from school)

- 1) **Assignment 1: Commentary** (multi-paragraph)
  - Write a commentary on a passage of your choice from the epic.
  - Include a typed (or Xeroxed copy of the passage)
  - Follow the format for writing a commentary you used in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade: annotate/color-code your selected passage; chunk the passage into sections (these sections can help you organize the paragraphs of your commentary); clarify the central focus; discuss how the language in each section creates meaning and develops the central focus (remember- it is not enough to just explain the meaning of a passage or to just identify the literary features/devices in a passage; your job is to show the relationship between the meaning and the language)

Some suggested passages (you may also feel free to select your own!)

-from Book IX – Kyklops

-from Book XI – Gathering of Shades (O’s trip to the underworld)

from Book XII – Sea Perils and Defeat

from Book XVII – the Beggar at the Manor

from Book XXI – the test of the bow

from Book XXIII – the Trunk of the Olive Tree

2) **Assignment 2: Comparison-Contrast** (multi-paragraph)

Select and view one of the “epic” films listed below. You may get together with other pre-IB 10 students and watch a film together as a group if you choose. Then, individually, write a comparison-contrast essay in which you discuss the nature of the hero in the film and the nature of the hero in The Odyssey. How are the two heroes similar? How are they different? *Films should be available at local video rental stores or through the public library collection.*

Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back

Lord of the Rings (any film in the trilogy)

The Princess Bride

Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon

Raiders of the Lost Ark

Lawrence of Arabia

Evita

Star Trek

Lara Croft: Tomb Raider

**Follow-up Assignment**

When we return to class, you will participate in a 4-stage writing process that will include oral discussion, reflective writing, supervised writing, and final essay production. The assignment integrates one of the newest components of the IB English curriculum.

The essay you write will ask you to reflect on the ending of *The Odyssey* and how effectively this ending concludes the epic tale. You may want to outline some ideas about this in advance of returning to class so that you have something prepared to work with for this assignment.

**Questions?**

If, over the summer, you find that you do not understand an aspect of the assignment and need clarification, please e-mail me. I will do my best to respond to you in a timely fashion.

Ms. Vieira -

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**Have a wonderful summer and I look forward to working with all of you next year !**