

*All modern American literature comes from one book by Mark Twain called
Huckleberry Finn.*

--Ernest Hemingway

*There is no book more important to me than [Their Eyes Were Watching God].
It speaks to me as no novel, past or present, has ever done.*

--Alice Walker

June 9, 2011

Dear 2011-2012 Senior:

Welcome to Advanced Placement Literature & Composition. The assigned summer reading for this year will consist of two texts which must be read prior to the first day of school in August. The first discussions and assignments of the school year will be based upon this reading, and we will refer back to this common reading experience often throughout the school year. This year's required texts are:

The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn by Mark Twain

Their Eyes Were Watching God by Zora Neale Hurston

The course will focus primarily upon preparation for the May exam and for college composition and literature study; the instruction and grading reflect this focus. By investing your best effort in the summer assignment, you will give yourself a strong start to a highly successful year.

I also recommend that you write at least rough drafts of your college essays this summer, as we do not work on these essays as part of the AP Lit course and fall is always a busy time, especially for seniors.

I look forward to working with you. Enjoy the summer.

Sincerely,

Dr. Berry

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3 Part Summer Reading Assignment

As you read...

- I. First, remember to enjoy it. True, these are assigned texts, and both are AP/college syllabus-caliber, classic works. But both are also novels that literally millions who have come before you have enjoyed. There is no grade for the enjoyment, but it usually shows in the other two sections.
- II. Second, annotate as you go. (annotate: to add critical or explanatory notes to a text)
If you are using your own copy of either novel, use a highlighter and write annotations directly in the book. If you are using a school or library copy, use Post-It style notes, always including page numbers in case a) they fall out, or b) you need to return the book to the library and check it out again just before school starts.

Be purposeful in selecting passages to mark. You do not want an entire book of bright ink or more Post-its than you could put to good use, but you do want to identify salient passages: those that strike you as important and possibly worthy of re-visiting.

Remember that annotations go beyond highlighting. Add margin notes, including comments/questions, connections to other parts of the book, reactions, and summary statements and/or reflections at the beginning/end of chapters. Good annotation is a key difference between pure recreational reading and effective, academic study of a text. You should:

1. Annotate examples of significant aspects of the text such as plot, character, irony, conflict, theme, etc.
2. Analyze the author's use of language—diction, tone, point of view, voice, etc.
3. Identify significant quotations. Consider those that help construct meaning in the work, but also consider implications beyond the novel, to your own life and/or the human experience.

Annotation rubric:

Points	Level of Analysis	Completeness
50	Annotations reveal an understanding of the complexities in the text. Setting, characterization, plot, and use of literary devices are analyzed.	Both entire novels are thoroughly covered, with no major lapses.
40	Understanding of the novel is clearly indicated, but with less insight than above and/or less attention to specific elements of literary works.	Significant portions of the novels appear to lack annotation.
30	Limited annotation is provided. Annotation may include paraphrasing/summary, inadequate attention to literary devices, and/or superficial analysis.	Scattered annotations are provided throughout most or all of both novels.
0	No evidence of a good-faith effort.	

_____/100

After you read...

- III. Select 5 brief passages (length per selection: 1 sentence to 1 paragraph) you have annotated from each of the selected novels. Each passage should be a selection that strikes YOU as important to the work—You and I are not interested in what SparkNotes, CliffsNotes, Shmoop, etc., or Hollywood directors consider important. This

is YOUR summer reading leading into your final year of high school. Study guides have their place, and you should always feel free discuss your reading with friends. But in the end your responses must reflect YOUR best thinking about the author’s actual words.

For each selected passage:

First, copy the passage verbatim, printed in bold font and contained in quotation marks. List the title of the novel, the chapter, and the page where it is found in your copy of the text.

Then, write a paragraph that:

- a) opens with a topic sentence that makes an assertion (CLAIM) about how the passage contributes to the meaning of the work (developing plot or specific aspect of character, reflecting a particular tone, etc.)
- b) SUPPORTS that assertion with at least one quotation from the passage, embedded seamlessly into a larger sentence
- c) INTERPRETS the claim and support, ensuring your reader understands why this passage is significant enough to deserve your analysis
- d) sticks to the importance of the passage within the work of literature and avoids personalizing analysis through the use of first (I, me, we) or second (you) person.

Your final, typed responses—10 passages, with 1 analysis paragraph each--will be submitted via Turnitin.com after we return in the fall.

Example (from another text):

***To Kill a Mockingbird*, Ch. 11: 110.**

“I wanted you to see what real courage is, instead of getting the idea that courage is a man with a gun in his hand. It's when you know you're licked before you begin but you begin anyway and you see it through no matter what. You rarely win, but sometimes you do.”

Atticus uses Jem’s experience reading to Mrs. Dubose to teach him that courage should be defined as making difficult choices when they are morally right. Jem has equated playing football and firing a gun with manhood and courage, but Atticus explains that “real courage” is instead doing whatever is right “when you know you’re licked before you begin.” Mrs. Dubose has chosen to fight to overcome her morphine addiction in her final weeks in order to die with peace of mind, even though this means facing more pain, both from her illness and from drug withdrawal. In his own work, Atticus has agreed to defend Tom Robinson despite racist pressure in his town and the challenge of arguing before a prejudiced jury. Mrs. Dubose dies and Atticus loses in court, but both demonstrate the definition of courage that Atticus wants his son to learn by “see[ing] it through no matter what.”

Analysis Paragraphs Rubric

Organization	Analysis/Support	Mechanics/Formatting
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Topic sentences clearly present assertions about the significance of selected passages • All sentences within paragraphs directly support topic sentences • Quotes are seamlessly embedded into larger sentences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis reflects strong insight into the meaning and significance of passages • Specific quotes from passages are used to support assertions • Paragraphs include clear interpretation, connecting wording of passages with meaning it creates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proofing is consistently effective • Academic style and tone are maintained throughout responses • Formatting matches assigned guidelines

40 Points	40 Points	20 Points
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Topic sentences are generally effective in making assertions about the significance of passages • Sentences within paragraphs inconsistently support topic sentences • Quotes are valid, but may not be seamlessly embedded into larger sentences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis reflects valid connections between meaning and significance of passages • Language of the passages is inconsistently used to support assertions • Paragraphs offer less developed interpretation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing contains scattered errors • Academic style and/or tone may be inconsistent • Formatting matches most of assigned guidelines
30 Points	30 Points	15 Points
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organization is somewhat effective 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis and support are somewhat effective 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mechanics and/or formatting include significant weaknesses
20 Points	20 Points	10 Points
Work submitted does not reflect a good-faith effort. 0 Points		

_____/100