

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 **and annotate** (see instructions below) the following work:

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: Annotations

- As you read, use post-it notes to carefully annotate the text. Your annotations may include the following:
 - summary comments
 - your insights into the characters and/or the story
 - questions that arise as you are reading
 - connections you can make to other texts, the real world, or your own life
 - an identification of the themes being developed
 - definitions of challenging words
 - any literary/rhetorical devices being used to enhance meaning
 - or anything else you want to comment on while reading!

- The quantity of your annotations is not as important as your authentic engagement with the text is. Nonetheless, you should have at least 50 annotations by the time you complete the epic.

2) **Assignment 2: Commentary** (multi-paragraph)

- Write a **multi-paragraph** commentary on a passage of your choice from the epic.
- The passage you select should be approximately 25-40 lines long. (No fewer than 20 lines)
- Include a typed (or Xeroxed copy of the passage)
- Follow the format for writing a commentary you used in the 9th 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

3) **Assignment 3: Comparison-Contrast**

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. *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

Robin Hood

Gandhi

Then, individually, respond to the following questions in your journal. Your responses should be thoughtful and complete. Incorporate evidence from both *The Odyssey* and the epic film in your responses. When we return to class, you will be turning these responses into a full length comparison-contrast essay, so the better developed the responses are, the stronger your final essay will be.

- (1) What is an epic hero and how does Odysseus fit this definition? How does the hero/heroine of your epic film fit this definition?
- (2) Discuss the impact on the text of one major decision that Odysseus makes in *The Odyssey*. In the film you viewed, discuss the impact of one major decision the epic hero/heroine makes.
- (3) An epic hero usually exemplifies the morals that are valued by his society, as well as the cultural and religious beliefs of the time. Some of the values of ancient Greece, for example, include respecting the will of the gods, taking great responsibility for one's family, honoring the dead, and treating a guest in your home with hospitality. Skills such as resourcefulness, wit, fighting ability, and storytelling were also highly valued by the culture. In what way does Odysseus convey the cultural values of ancient Greece? In what way does your film's epic hero/heroine convey the cultural values of his/her time period?

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 - Carrie_P_Vieira@mcpsmd.org

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