

IB ENGLISH LEVEL I
2018 SUMMER READING ASSIGNMENTS
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General Instructions:

- **Carefully** and **closely** read *The God of Small Things* by Arundhati Roy (novel).
- Following the specific instructions given below, complete the written assignments by **typing** them on 8½ x 11 white paper. Use Times New Roman, Calibri, or Ariel font (12) and one-inch margins.
- **Complete the reading by the first day of school.** Turn the written assignments in on the first Friday of the school year (the deadline for late work will be the following Monday).
- Be prepared for a timed writing and/or a test on the reading.

Assignment#1: *The God of Small Things*

Select ONE element of Roy's style in *The God of Small Things* and write an essay in which you analyze and interpret its contributions to the development of characters, tone, and/or mood AND meaning in the novel. Possible stylistic features or elements to examine include but are not limited to word play, motifs, musical elements, fragmented/unusual syntax, repetition, poetic imagery and synesthesia, non-linear narration, foreshadowing, violations of rules of standard grammar usage, and allusion. The attached rubric for essays will be used to assess your work. Be sure to use ample evidence (especially in the form of direct quotations) and to evaluate the effectiveness of this aspect of Roy's style. Use MLA format for the paper, the parenthetical citations, and the works cited page.

Assignment #2: Commentary

Select **either** the passage beginning "The birds chattered..." **or** the poem "(love song, with two goldfish)" and write a commentary—see below. The attached rubric for commentaries will be used to assess your work.

How to Write a Commentary

- A commentary is one of the primary forms of evaluation for the English portion of the IB program. During the next two years, you will complete both written and oral commentaries. You may remember writing one your freshman year, and you probably wrote more than one sophomore year. The sooner you are familiar with commentaries, the better you will do!
- Think of a commentary as a running monologue about the poem or passage. Instead of attempting to prove a thesis, theme, or central idea about the passage, you are analyzing and interpreting the entire piece, noting how literary devices and elements communicate meaning—theme, mood, and/or tone.
- Begin with an introduction which provides a sense of the manner in which you are approaching the piece and identifies any overarching meaning. Look for shifts and progressions of such meaning as theme, tone, and mood. Identify what you see and consider its impact on meaning.
- For your body paragraphs focus on tracing those shifts you've identified by thoroughly describing, analyzing, and interpreting the meaning you see in them. You do not have to analyze every single word, but you should be very thorough in your analysis and be sure to connect any analytic point you make to the meaning you interpret. Be sure to present your ideas in an organized fashion and to include all parts of the poem or passage in your analysis.
- IB recommends an average length of 5 sides (handwritten) per commentary. Since you will be typing your commentary, you should aim for about three pages. Do not write less than two full pages.

ASSIGNMENT #2: COMMENTARY

Write a commentary on *one* of the following:

The birds chattered in the fir trees by the front corner of the house, dusting the yard with more snow. Maybe they made all that noise to comfort one another in the cold. She wished she could gather them all into her house. Why didn't their little bodies freeze like ice-cubes? What kept them warm? Their little hearts beating fiercely like an old coal stove? How many shovels had she shucked into one of them?

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She saw her neighbor pouring a bucket on his garden rows. Probably sheep manure. He was far away but he waved at her and the howl of his black dog broke the cold. Her cat looked up, alarmed.

On the edge of her garden she found a cob emptied of its corn. It sparkled on one end with frost. She looked at the muffin-tin shape. The honeycomb openings where the kernels had gone. She decided the spirits left it there. Everytime she moved they snipped another detail from the world. They had taken enough from her. Now she was getting parts of it back, sucking them deep within herself. She felt her bowels rumble. The thick branches of the bush stitched a net for her. The empty garden rows. All of them growing like frozen vines around her. Maybe she'd disappear into them someday.

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Inside the house once more, she wiped a place to look through the window. Her cat would be scratching at the door soon. She lit the stove and boiled water for tea. She saw that the wet teabag looked like birdseed. She turned the furnace down even farther when it came on. She didn't want to call the gas truck yet. She would wear her coat and scarf, her galoshes and gloves in the house.

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Where was her needle? She needed to work her fingers. They felt blue and cold. She'd sew a bright pocket on the dress she was working on. A pocket to help her remember everything she saw. Things she noticed, thoughts she wanted to store in her head. The bush with the blue gas-flame of the blue jays' heads. The pattern of frost growing on the windows. How it covered the glass like ancient cave markings or the scribblings of a child. No, it wasn't the frost at all. It was the spirits that got loose when it was cold. The north wind opened up a highway and they slipped right down to the Great Lakes from the north. Hadn't she seen them after her husband died last winter? Hadn't she heard his ice-fishing decoys rattle one night? Weren't the spirits a pale blue when she looked from the window,

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floating around the house like manta rays¹? Their graceful edges undulating in the dim light from the window. Now they were wrapping her house in cellophane. She knew it as she stood at the sink looking out. Something scratched the door and it startled her, but she remembered it was the cat and she let him in.

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She knew another secret. They had been in her house. They could walk across the floor without creaking. They could sit on her roof and she'd never know it. Stingrays with their blue-finger edges. Devilfish! She whacked the counter with her broom. The cat ran.

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They were coming to take her too. She panicked at the sink. She saw her husband in his icehouse fishing in winter. She felt like she was walking barefoot across the ice to him. She fought to hold to the counter. But she was shuffling across the lake. The drift of cold fog across the ice was like a line of old people. Inside her head, birds flew from the wall. They banged at the windows to get out. Up the road, the church steeple hung like a telephone pole pulled crooked by its wires after an ice storm. How long had she been there? The room circled like the round hole in the ice. She felt the tight hole around her chest. There was something hurting her ankles. She was tangled in the fishing line that went down into the cold, dark hole below her. Now the sun shined its wicked and beautiful pattern on the kitchen window. The cold fog still shuffled across the lake. Something knocked the old cans and kettles from the counter to the floor. She was walking up the road now. Wasn't the afternoon light through the window-frost like a church? How many years had she sung hymns up the road? The little tendrils of the ice like petroglyphs²? She heard her children drawing in the frost on the windows. She reached for the finger she saw at the glass. But the icehole burped like her old husband in his chair and the frigid water closed her up.

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—Diane Glancy, "Polar Breath" (1993)

¹ Manta rays are the largest of the ray family of fish. Rays are a type of flattened fish with pectoral fins like wings. The body is broad and flat; mantas are generally about 6 meters wide.

² Images carved or engraved on rock, usually associated with the prehistoric age

(love song, with two goldfish)

(He's a drifter, always
floating around her, has
nowhere else to go. He wishes
she would sing, not much, just the scales;
5 or take some notice,
give him the fish eye.)

(Bounded by round walls
she makes fish eyes
and kissy lips at him, darts
10 behind pebbles, swallows
his charms hook, line and sinker)

(He's bowled over. He would
take her to the ocean, they could
count the waves. There,
15 in the submarine silence, they would share
their deepest secrets. Dive for pearls
like stars.)

(But her love's since
gone belly-up. His heart sinks
20 like a fish. He drinks
like a stone. Drowns those sorrows,
stares emptily through glass.)

(the reason, she said
she wanted)
25 (and he could not give)
a life
beyond the
(bowl)

ESSAY RUBRIC

criterion	0	1	2	3	4	5
<p>A: Knowledge and understanding How much knowledge and understanding has the student shown of the work studied in relation to the element selected?</p>	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors.	There is some knowledge but virtually no understanding of the work in relation to the element.	There is mostly adequate knowledge and some superficial understanding of the work in relation to the element.	There is adequate knowledge and understanding of the work in relation to the element.	There is good knowledge and understanding of the work in relation to the element.	There is perceptive knowledge and understanding of the work in relation to the element.
<p>B: Analysis of the element and interpretation of its effects How well has the student understood the use of the element? To what extent has the student responded to it? How well have the ideas been developed and supported?</p>	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors.	The student shows little awareness of the main implications of the use of the element, and ideas are mainly irrelevant and/or insignificant. There is little meaningful development or support of the ideas communicated.	The student responds to some of the main implications of the use of the element with some relevant ideas. There is a superficial attempt to develop the ideas communicated.	The student responds to most of the main implications of the use of the element with consistently relevant ideas. There is adequate development and support of the ideas communicated.	The student responds to the main implications and some subtleties of the use of the element, with relevant and carefully explored ideas. The development and support of ideas makes some evaluation of the work.	The student responds to all the implications, as well as the subtleties of the use of the element, with convincing and thoughtful ideas. The development and support of ideas communicated includes an effective evaluation of the work.
<p>C: Appreciation of literary conventions To what extent does the student identify and appreciate the use of literary conventions in relation to the element and the work?</p>	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors.	Some literary conventions are identified but there is limited development relevant to the work.	Examples of literary conventions are sometimes correctly identified and developed, with some relevance to the work.	Examples of literary conventions are satisfactorily identified and developed, with relevance to the work.	Examples of literary conventions are clearly identified and effectively developed, with relevance to the work.	Examples of literary conventions are perceptively identified and persuasively developed, with clear relevance to the work.
<p>D: Organization and development How well organized, coherent and developed is the presentation of ideas?</p>	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors.	Ideas have little organization; there may be a superficial structure, but coherence and/or development are lacking.	Ideas have some organization, with a recognizable structure, but coherence and development are often lacking.	Ideas are adequately organized, with a suitable structure and attention paid to coherence and development.	Ideas are effectively organized, with a very good structure, coherence and development.	Ideas are persuasively organized, with excellent structure, coherence and development.
<p>E: Language How clear, varied and accurate is the language? How appropriate is the choice of register, style and terminology? ("Register" refers to the student's use of elements such as vocabulary, tone, sentence structure and terminology appropriate to the task.)</p>	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors.	Language is rarely clear and appropriate; there are many errors in grammar, vocabulary and sentence construction and little sense of register and style.	Language is sometimes clear and carefully chosen; grammar, vocabulary and sentence construction are fairly accurate, although errors and inconsistencies are apparent; the register and style are to some extent appropriate to the task.	Language is clear and carefully chosen, with an adequate degree of accuracy in grammar, vocabulary and sentence construction despite some lapses; register and style are mostly appropriate to the task.	Language is clear and carefully chosen, with a good degree of accuracy in grammar, vocabulary and sentence construction; register and style are consistently appropriate to the task.	Language is very clear, effective, carefully chosen and precise, with a high degree of accuracy in grammar, vocabulary and sentence construction; register and style are effective and appropriate to the task.

COMMENTARY RUBRIC

criterion	0	1	2	3	4	5
<p>A: Understanding and interpretation How well does the student's interpretation reveal understanding of the thought and feeling of the passage? How well are the ideas supported by references to the passage?</p>	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors.	There is a basic understanding of the passage but virtually no attempt at interpretation and few references to the passage.	There is some understanding of the passage, with a superficial attempt at interpretation and some appropriate references to the passage.	There is adequate understanding of the passage, demonstrated by an interpretation that is supported by appropriate references to the passage.	There is a very good understanding of the passage, demonstrated by sustained interpretation supported by well-chosen references to the passage.	There is excellent understanding of the passage, demonstrated by persuasive interpretation supported by effective references to the passage.
<p>B: Appreciation of the writer's choices To what extent does the analysis show appreciation of how the writer's choices of language, structure, technique and style shape meaning?</p>	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors.	There are few references to, and no analysis or appreciation of, the ways in which language, structure, technique and style shape meaning.	There is some mention, but little analysis or appreciation, of the ways in which language, structure, technique and style shape meaning.	There is adequate analysis and appreciation of the ways in which language, structure, technique and style shape meaning.	There is very good analysis and appreciation of the ways in which language, structure, technique and style shape meaning.	There is excellent analysis and appreciation of the ways in which language, structure, technique and style shape meaning.
<p>C: Organization and development How well organized, coherent and developed is the presentation of ideas?</p>	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors.	Ideas have little organization; there may be a superficial structure, but coherence and development are lacking.	Ideas have some organization, with a recognizable structure; coherence and development are often lacking.	Ideas are adequately organized, with a suitable structure; some attention is paid to coherence and development.	Ideas are effectively organized, with very good structure, coherence and development.	Ideas are persuasively organized, with excellent structure, coherence and development.
<p>D: Language How clear, varied and accurate is the language? How appropriate is the choice of register, style and terminology? ("Register" refers to the student's use of elements such as vocabulary, tone, sentence structure and terminology appropriate to the commentary.)</p>	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors.	Language is rarely clear and appropriate; there are many errors in grammar, vocabulary and sentence construction, and little sense of register and style.	Language is sometimes clear and carefully chosen; grammar, vocabulary and sentence construction are fairly accurate, although errors and inconsistencies are apparent; the register and style are to some extent appropriate to the commentary.	Language is clear and carefully chosen, with an adequate degree of accuracy in grammar, vocabulary and sentence construction despite some lapses; register and style are mostly appropriate to the commentary.	Language is clear and carefully chosen, with a good degree of accuracy in grammar, vocabulary and sentence construction; register and style are consistently appropriate to the commentary.	Language is very clear, effective, carefully chosen and precise, with a high degree of accuracy in grammar, vocabulary and sentence construction; register and style are effective and appropriate to the commentary.

MLA Formatting and Style Guide

Paper Format General Guidelines

- Type your paper on a computer and print it out on standard, white 8.5 x 11-inch paper.
- Double-space the text of your paper, and use a legible font (e.g. Times New Roman). Whatever font you choose, MLA recommends that the regular and italics type styles contrast enough that they are recognizable one from another. The font size should be 12 pt.
- Leave only one space after periods or other punctuation marks (unless otherwise instructed by your instructor).
- Set the margins of your document to 1 inch on all sides.
- Indent the first line of paragraphs one half-inch from the left margin. MLA recommends that you use the Tab key as opposed to pushing the Space Bar five times.
- Create a header that numbers all pages consecutively in the upper right-hand corner, one-half inch from the top and flush with the right margin. (Note: Your instructor may ask that you omit the number on your first page. Always follow your instructor's guidelines.)
- Use italics throughout your essay for the titles of longer works and, only when absolutely necessary, providing emphasis.
- If you have any endnotes, include them on a separate page before your Works Cited page. Entitle the section Notes (centered, unformatted).

Formatting the First Page of Your Paper

- Do not make a title page for your paper unless specifically requested.
- In the upper left-hand corner of the first page, list your name, your instructor's name, the course, and the date. Again, be sure to use double-spaced text.
- Double space again and center the title. Do not underline, italicize, or place your title in quotation marks; write the title in Title Case (standard capitalization), not in all capital letters.
- Use quotation marks and/or italics when referring to other works in your title, just as you would in your text: *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas* as *Morality Play*; *Human Weariness* in "After Apple Picking"
- Double space between the title and the first line of the text.
- Create a header in the upper right-hand corner that includes your last name, followed by a space with a page number; number all pages consecutively with Arabic numerals (1, 2, 3, 4, etc.), one-half inch from the top and flush with the right margin. (Note: Your instructor or other readers may ask that you omit last name/page number header on your first page. Always follow instructor guidelines.)