

AP Literature & Composition

Summer Reading Assignment 2019-2020

Mr. Jefferies, Room 275

Directions: You must complete *all parts* of this assignment. Each part must be completed by the assigned deadline.

Things to consider:

- The summer reading work and corresponding assignments will comprise a **significant portion of your first term grade**. The creative characterization essay will be worth 50 pts. in the “Major Grades” category. The formal analytical essay will be worth 100 pts. in the “Major Grades” category.
- In addition to the graded summer essays, **there will be a reading check quiz, a graded discussion, and an essay test (AP prompt) on summer reading material during the first unit of the fall semester**. These grades *increase* the importance of your summer work!

I. *The Poisonwood Bible* (Barbara Kingsolver)

- “The year is 1959 and the place is the Belgian Congo. Nathan, a Baptist preacher, has come to spread the Word in a remote village reachable only by airplane. To say that he and his family are woefully unprepared would be an understatement: “We came from Bethlehem, Georgia, bearing Betty Crocker cake mixes into the jungle,” says Leah, one of Nathan's daughters. But of course it isn't long before they discover that the tremendous humidity has rendered the mixes unusable, their clothes are unsuitable, and they've arrived in the middle of political upheaval as the Congolese seek to wrest independence from Belgium. In addition to poisonous snakes, dangerous animals, and the hostility of the villagers to Nathan's fiery take-no-prisoners brand of Christianity, there are also rebels in the jungle and the threat of war in the air. Could things get any worse?” (Amazon.com).

Your assignment:

- Read the novel. *Believe me*; you'll enjoy this book if you give it a chance!
- Take careful notes on the novel. **These notes will not be collected**; however, you are expected to demonstrate a familiarity with key aspects of the novel (i.e., plot, characters, basic themes, symbols) when we return to school in September. Reading notes are a great tool to refresh the memory! They also become a valuable tool when preparing for seminar discussions or quizzes.
- **As you read, pay close attention to the indirect characterization of the females in the Price family.** (You may want to take notes on each character's personality, including the key moments in the novel that reveal their personality and their reaction to conflicts.)

Creative Character Essay (due by midnight on 7/31/19):

- As you read, complete the following task in a **two page, double-spaced essay**: *Each chapter in the novel is masterfully narrated by a member of the Price family; however, Kingsolver never grants Nathan Price his own chapter in which to share his thoughts, emotions, and rationale. **For this creative characterization assignment, write a chapter for The Poisonwood Bible from the first person point of view of Nathan Price.** Be sure to indicate where in the story (between what chapters) Nathan's chapter slots in. While this assignment is creative in nature, you are responsible for providing an accurate characterization of Nathan based on information provided by the other narrators. You should reference actual events from the novel. Your goal is to both demonstrate an understanding of Nathan's character, as well as the events in the text. Have some fun with it, but make it believable!*
- **To fully complete this assignment, you should read through Section Three (“The Judges”) of the text before writing.** The section contains important information and context about Nathan's character, information that you will want to consider when writing from his point of view.
- The essay assignment is **due by 11:59 p.m. on Wednesday, July 31st, 2019** and should be submitted via Google Docs to the AP Literature Summer Reading Google Classroom. (If you are having technical issues with the Google Classroom site, plan on emailing your work to me by the deadline.) You should also submit your work to turnitin.com.

Formal Analytical Essay (due by midnight on 9/3/2019):

- When you have finished the novel, write an essay response on the following prompt: *In many ways, characters in literature are on a quest for self-knowledge. With that idea in mind, select one (1) character from the novel and explain how he or she grows and changes over the course of the novel. Explain the evolution in action, words, and/or thought that reveals dynamic growth on the part of the character. If you feel that a particular character remains static and does not change, carefully explain how her personality at the end of the novel is consistent with her presentation at the beginning. Be sure to include specific references to the text, as well illuminating quotations.*
- Your typed assignment must be **at least three full, double-spaced pages** but not longer than four pages.
- You should demonstrate all the conventions of formal essay writing: introduction paragraph, a “how, what, why” thesis statement, topic sentences, concrete evidence, well-chosen quotations, MLA citations, explanations, transitions, and a conclusion paragraph.
- The essay assignment is **due by 11:59 p.m. on Tuesday, September 3rd, 2019** and should be submitted via Google Docs to the AP Literature Summer Reading Google Classroom. (If you are having technical issues with the Google Classroom site, plan on emailing your work to me by the deadline.) You should also submit your work to turnitin.com.

II. Writing Expectations:

- **Students in the AP Literature course are responsible for prior learning.** While the elements of style are a heavy focus in the AP Literature class, students who enroll in the course are expected to have a basic proficiency in some elements of composition, including grammar, usage, and organizational structure. Essay grades will be influenced, both positively and negatively, by a student’s writing style and mechanics. Please consult the “Writing Tips” sheet before editing and submitting your work. My expectation is that your turn in a polished draft, not a rough one.
- **Understand that writing is a process.** In my experience, there are very few students who can write an “A” paper in one sitting. Writing is a process that requires several edits and drafts. A student who begins a summer essay at 10:00 p.m. on the night it is due will not be as successful as one who works through the writing process over the course of a few days.
- **Remember to tie your creative characterization essay to the text.** Overly vague or abstract references to the text will not demonstrate an understanding of novel.
- **Remember to include all elements of an analytical essay.** As this is a literature paper, you should include all elements of an analytical essay, including MLA citations.
- **No shortcuts, please.** Please use normal sized font (e.g., Times New Roman, 12 pt. font) and margins (no larger than 1 inch). Please do not mess with spacing requirements.

VI. Academic Integrity:

- **All students are bound by the BHS Student/Parent Handbook concerning issues of plagiarism and cheating.** Any student found to be in violation of this policy (i.e., using a past student’s work, copying information from an online source, turning in the same work as another student, etc.) will receive no credit for the assignment and may jeopardize their placement in the AP course.
- **The summer work is an important foundation to the school year.** The work you complete over the summer will be used heavily during the first term; this is not a “throw away” assignment or “busy work.” As such, you should treat the assignment with the same care you would as one assigned over the school year. Any student seeking to gain credit through cheating or plagiarism will severely hurt their first term average and risk enrollment in the class.
- **Ignorance is not an excuse.** If you are unsure whether or not something constitutes as plagiarism, feel free to contact your teacher. If it’s late in the game, use the old adage: “when in doubt, cite it out.” Ignorance of what constitutes plagiarism is not an acceptable defense.