

AP Literature and Composition Summer Reading Assignment 2009

There are three summer reading assignments for AP Literature and Composition. Students will start with Thomas C. Foster's *How to Read Literature like a Professor* and then use it in application with another contemporary novel selected from the following list.

Required Reading:

Foster, Thomas C. *How to Read Literature like a Professor*

Pick One of the Following:

Abe, Kobo. *Box Man*

Auster, Paul. *Leviathan*

Chevalier, Tracy. *The Girl with the Pearl Earring*

Crace, Jim. *Being Dead*

Delillo, Don. *Falling Man*

Eggers, David. *You Shall Know Our Velocity*

Haddon, Mark. *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Nighttime*

McCarthy, Cormac. *The Road*

Niffenegger, Audrey. *The Time Traveler's Wife*

O'Brien, Tim. *In the Lake of the Woods*

Reed, Ishmael. *Flight to Canada*

Vonnegut, Kurt. *Galapagos*

Welty, Eudora. *The Optimist's Daughter*

Wolfe, Thomas. *You Can't Go Home Again*

Wolff, Tobias. *Old School*

Assignment #1

Read the Foster text *first*. Then, as you read your chosen novel, look for elements that can be symbolically analyzed in a similar manner as the examples in Foster's book. Write a four to eight paragraph literary analysis of your chosen novel, analyzing no fewer than three elements from the novel that you were able to connect to Foster. Each body paragraph should include a direct quote from your chosen novel, as well as a citation—either direct or paraphrased—from Foster.

These essays will be expected to demonstrate a reasonable mastery of syntax and diction; the ability to fluidly integrate, explain, and connect quotes from a text to support a thesis; use of MLA formatting including citations from both the novel and the Foster text; and proper conventions and mechanics. Be prepared to submit the assignment to turnitin.com; save a copy on your computer or a jump drive.

For guidance on both MLA and literary analysis, please use the [Online Writing Laboratory](#) at Purdue University.

Assignment #2

The purpose of this assignment is for you to write a topic sentence summarizing each chapter of Foster's book. **Do not** embed the question in your answer; instead you should (1) try to write some short, pithy statements and (2) vary your sentence structure to include beginning with phrases and using subordinate clauses.

Questions follow the chronology of the book. You **MUST** document each answer by citing in parentheses the page number where you found the answer. Do **NOT** copy the answers directly; put the answer in your own words. All of the answers will, of course, be the opinion of Thomas Foster, so citing his name is not necessary; do know, however, that other critics have differing opinions about some of the points Foster makes.

Use your word processor to answer the questions. Use a 12 point, clear font. Be prepared to submit the assignment to turnitin.com; save a copy on your computer or a jump drive.

1. What is the real reason for every quest?
2. How is “eating” an act of communion?
3. What are *doppelgangers*?
4. What does the *8/6 pattern* mean?
5. What is *intertextuality*?
6. Why do writers rely on Shakespeare more than they rely on other writers? E.g., what does a writer gain by reference, oblique or not, to Shakespeare?
7. How do Biblical references add dimension to 20th Century stories?
8. What is *the literary canon* and what reasoning is the author using when he suggests the use of *kiddie lit*?
9. What does the writer mean by *group memory*?
10. In modern literature, how is “rain” a *mixed medium*?
11. What does the author mean when he says “death lacks gravitas” in mystery novels?
12. What does the author mean about symbols when he says that “Imagination isn’t fantasy”?
13. Why do political and social considerations find their way onto the page in some guise?
14. Why is it necessary, regardless of one’s religious affiliation, to know something about the Old and New Testaments?
15. What does the author say about interpreting figurative flight?
16. What is meant by “plausible deniability” in terms of sex details in novels?
17. The author says that even our sexiest writing doesn’t have much sex in it. What reason does he give?
18. How does the author correlate drowning, baptism and rebirth in terms of literature?
19. How does geography impact various elements in literature?
20. Why do the seasons, spring, summer, fall and winter usually symbolize the same things from one piece of writing to another?
21. Explain the author’s idea of “one story”.
22. Why do authors create characters with physical flaws?
23. Why would a writer put a blind character in a story?
24. In literature, why and how is heart disease lyrical?
25. What metaphorical possibilities are created by an author’s use of illnesses other than heart disease?
26. What does Foster mean by “deconstruction” as a model of literary criticism and why does he dislike it?
27. Describe characters in an “ironic mode” piece of literature.

Assignment #3

College Essay

Research the colleges in which you are interested and find the topic of their application essay. Alter the word limit/requirement to 500 words or less; write the essay and bring it in. If your first choice school does not require an essay, please continue researching until you find one that does. Essays for scholarships are also acceptable.

If you cannot find an essay suitable for this assignment, you may choose one of the following prompts:

1. Parents often comment to their children, “You are just like your _____ (mother, father, grandmother, grandfather, etc.)” Tell of an incident in which you were involved and prompted such a statement from your parent.
2. Describe the worst thing that ever happened to you and tell how that event changed your life.
3. Describe your most triumphant moment in high school and tell how your peers responded to that event.
4. You have invited to dinner your favorite character from your favorite book. What questions would you ask him/her? How would he/she respond? (Keep in mind that this is an essay.)

ALL ASSIGNMENTS ARE DUE THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL. NO EXCUSES WILL BE ACCEPTED. ANY WORK NOT COMPLETED BY THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL WILL RECEIVE A ZERO IN THE GRADEBOOK.