

Summer Reading Assignment for AP Language and Composition Gulf High School -Mrs. Fuss

Congratulations! You have enrolled AP Language and Composition! I look forward to working with you during the 2012-13 school year. As I'm sure you know, AP is a challenging, academically rigorous class. You will begin your journey this summer by reading and completing some activities designed to enhance the material we will be covering during the regular school year.

I have two classic novels for you to consider, *The Grapes of Wrath* and *The Scarlet Letter*. These books can be purchased at a book store or checked out of the public library. Many of these books can be found at used book stores or online at half.com. Certainly, you may borrow them from your friends and family, as well.

We will begin the fall semester of AP Language with AP-style practice tests and time writings on the two novels you will need to read this summer. As you read, you will need to summarize each chapter, take notes on character, setting, and any literary devices you notice, and organize this information in a reading journal. There is a 1500 word requirement on each book. You may also wish to make notes in your book if it is yours to keep. During the first week of school, I will collect your journals for each book for a grade. You will also be permitted to use our journals on many of the multiple choice quizzes and timed writings.

Your journals should be organized by chapter and done in a composition book. (Those are the old school marbled books.) If you want to type, you may; but you will need to paste the typed copy into your composition book.

A Note on *The Grapes of Wrath* by John Steinbeck:

Some novels leave the reader who is not widely read confused, because the reader knows little of the social, economic, or historical context in which the characters are operating. Steinbeck, however, provides this context in his novel. With a few exceptions, most odd numbered chapters provide a context for the Joad family story. As a result, you know how and why events happen. The odd-numbered chapters seem extraneous at first, but you should note in your reading journal how the odd-numbered chapters illustrate and/or illuminate what is to come. (In discussion, odd-numbered chapters are referred to as inter chapters and the even-numbered chapters are narrative.)

A Note on *The Scarlet Letter* by Nathaniel Hawthorne:

When you read *The Scarlet Letter*, you may want to begin with Chapter 1 and read the introduction (The Custom House) last. The narrative begins in Chapter 1 and most people find it easier to get interested in the book beginning there. The introduction will be more interesting and easier to understand if read last. This is just a suggestion. If you feel compelled to start at the "beginning", please do. Special Note: I realize that many of you have already read this novel in a classroom setting. That's okay since Hawthorne is a difficult read and your past exposure will help you read it again on your own. Plus, we will be doing things with the text that you've never done before.

A Note on *Everything's an Argument* & other books:

Later in the school year, we will be writing several argumentation and synthesis essays. This book will be extremely helpful. We will have a class set to use and a book will be checked out to you to use at home. If you are so inclined, you may choose to purchase one of your own. However, this is not mandatory.

You may also wish to purchase an AP practice book. College Board puts one out, as does The Princeton Review. Another excellent book is ***5 Steps to a 5 for AP English Language*** by McGraw-Hill. These books are not mandatory purchase, but you may find them useful.

You will enjoy reading if you read actively with your mind and heart. To let yourself get lost in the story, you must avoid the temptation to skim just to get through the book. Students who end up appreciating the novel are the ones who really read it. If you come away from these two novels with the idea that they are both boring, then you know that you did not read actively. AP Language requires an active reader, so train yourself this summer to be one so that you will be successful in class from the beginning. (Warning: Cliff's Notes are totally useless in an AP Language class since they focus on summarizing. Stay away from them and think for yourself.)

Have a great summer reading!