

Summer Reading Assignment 2009-2010

English 4 LEAP/AP

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The summer reading assignment is designed to help you prepare for college and the AP exam, where skills developed by avid reading are essential. The summer assignment is due on the first day of school in August regardless of when you are scheduled to have English class. If you cannot afford to buy the books, see me about your difficulty because I can provide copies for you.

Assignment: You are required to read *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen (Barnes and Noble Classics Edition) and *1984* by George Orwell. You will have an objective exam and composition (major grades) over both works during the first week of class. Bring both books to the first day of class.

- You should be prepared to take the test and write the composition without the usual class discussion, so it would be wise to annotate well as you read the selections.
- Relying on SparkNotes or similar “aids” will lead you to fail the test and the essay, which are two major grades in the first 9 weeks. I will specifically design test questions to foil those who read SparkNotes rather than the actual novel, so be sure you actually read the books.
- Good annotation should help you perform well on the test, on the composition, and on the many graded activities related to the summer reading. Your annotations will NOT be graded directly, but strong written interaction with the texts will help you score a higher grade, so I encourage you to make note of the significant moments in the stories and annotate well. Be sure you note thematic ideas throughout the stories for potential essay topics you can write about later; it would be prudent to note moments in the story that connect to the themes you identify. See the attached annotation guide for help.
- Pay attention to the recommended methods and strategies for annotating your books that are attached. Again, annotations are not required and will not be graded; however, they are highly recommended, especially for spring students who will have to remember the book months later for the test and composition. Poor scores on the test and/or composition will jeopardize your chances of passing the first 9 weeks.

Focus for Reading: Some Questions to Consider

- *Pride and Prejudice*
 - In the story, what character traits allow pride/prejudice to be created and fostered in a person?
 - What enables a person in the novel to overcome the detriments of pride and prejudice?
 - Why do some characters in the story overcome pride/prejudice while others do not?
 - How do first impressions influence our judgments?
 - What qualities distinguish good marriages from poor ones in the story?
 - What does the story suggest about how to live a happy, successful life?

- *1984*
 - What are the benefits and problems with a society structured like the one in the novel?
 - What role should government play in our personal lives, and where should we draw the line?
 - How are our lives and our society similar to those depicted in the novel?
 - In America today, how much does the media influence/control what we think?
 - What does the novel suggest we avoid or do about the deluge of information and the roles of the media and government? What does the novel warn us against?
 - What is the psychological purpose behind the concept of *Two Minutes Hate*? What rights should “hate” groups like the KKK have?

Instructions for Annotating a Text

annotate – verb: to furnish (a literary work) with critical commentary or explanatory notes

Careful readers often annotate their texts. Here are some suggestions for how to make notes in your novels. (If the book is NOT yours, you may use Post-It Notes.)

Inside Front Cover – A **GOOD theme statement** should be written, with page citations for supporting passages. All your annotations build toward this, so your theme statement should be given the most attention – it is the most important element for which you do all the other annotating as you read. A poor theme will lead to weak content in the composition you write about the book.

Inside Back Cover – Allusions, images, motifs, key scenes, plot line, epiphanies, etc... List and add page references and / or notes as you read.

Chapter summaries / titles – At the end of each chapter, write a brief summary of the plot as it occurred in that chapter. This does not have to be long or greatly detailed, but should include all relevant incidents, then go back and write a one-phrase summary as the title of the chapter.

Underline – Within the text of the book, and **as you read**, underline or otherwise note anything that strikes you as important, significant, or memorable. **Write brief comments in the margins that indicate your reason for marking it by commenting on the significance of the underlined text.** Focus on essential stylistic devices (diction, syntax, imagery, literary devices, tone) and elements of literature (plot, setting, characterization, point of view, and theme).

Brackets – Use brackets, **as you read**, together with abbreviations and symbols to indicate passages (too long to underline) that contain important themes, wonderfully nuanced descriptions, especially delightful phrasing and / or syntax, provocative assertions, and figurative language. And, of course, write comments and analytical snippets to clarify your thinking. You may use post-it notes for more extensive commentary.

Vocabulary / unusual diction – Within the text of the book, circle words that are unfamiliar to you or whose use strikes you as unusual or inventive. Look up words in a dictionary that seem essential to an understanding of the meaning or the sense of the author. Jot a brief definition or synonym in a nearby margin.

Questions – Actively engage the text and extend/confirm your understanding of each chapter by writing your own questions. These should be WHY or HOW questions that may guide you to deeper comprehension of meaning.

Shifts – Note all shifts in point of view, shifts in time, and shifts in diction and syntax.

The Process:

There are a number of procedural expectations that make annotation practical and effective.

1. Implement a consistent system. Use the same abbreviations and symbols every time you annotate. (See below for examples.)
2. Use one color ink to do initial marking while reading, then go back with another color or colors to mark more thoroughly once you have finished a larger section and have had time to think about it. Why? You may change your mind or get it wrong the first time, or subsequent discoveries may prompt a reevaluation or earlier findings.
3. Do underlining, bracket notations, and circling as you read.
4. At chapter or section ends, stop to index page numbers on your front cover list of character information and traits as well as on your back cover list of themes, images, allusions, etc. Also, write chapter summaries and the end-of-the-chapter questions at that time.
5. Be neat and be disciplined.

Some suggested ABBREVIATIONS / SYMBOLS:

b/c = because	= change
+ = and	PLOT = plot item (and / or use one of the following):
w/ = with	EXP = exposition
w/o = without	TP = turning point
b/t = between	Cf = conflict
e.g. = for example	RA = rising action
ex = example	Cx = climax
info = information	FA = falling action
b4 = before	RES = resolution
= increase, improvement, rising	Ch = characterization
= decrease, decline, falling	S = setting
* = important	POV = point of view (mention type: 1 st person, limited omniscient, etc.)
** = very important	Th = theme
# = of the utmost importance; crucial to understanding	Top = topic
> = use caret to point to an exact location	LT = literary term (identify the term by name: irony, tone, foreshadowing, personification, metaphor, symbol, etc.)

Final Note on Theme: A theme *statement* is not a topic (such as death, love, greed, etc.) but a **statement ABOUT** that topic; it is never a cliché expression. Good theme statements express **profound insight** on a topic that is then developed as strong content in a composition.