

# AP Literature and Composition 12<sup>th</sup> grade

## Summer Reading Assignment for the 2018-2019 School Year

### THE PURPOSE OF ADVANCED PLACEMENT CLASSES

In August 2018, you will enter Advanced Placement English IV. Not only will you engage in a year of extensive advanced studies to prepare you for the Advanced Placement English Literature and Composition Exam in Spring 2019, you will also have the privilege of experiencing and examining some of the world's great pieces of literature. To begin our studies, you must complete the following summer reading assignments.

### SUMMER READING DEADLINES AND EXPECTATIONS

- Students will discuss and be tested over summer reading within the first week of school.
- On the first day of class in August, the summer assignment is due. **No late work will be accepted.**
- In order to complete the following assignments to the best of your ability, review/study your AP Literary Terms.

### SUMMER READING ASSIGNMENTS

#### PART ONE

*Grendel* by John Gardner: You should purchase this novel if possible so that you may write in it. You will need to read this novel keeping the tenets of existentialism in mind (read attached handout!). As you read *Grendel*, you should annotate consistently throughout. Highlight items that “speak” to you or are interesting or unknown. You must also keep a Dialectical Journal as you read. This journal will be turned in for a major grade.

#### PART TWO

*The Importance of Being Earnest* by Oscar Wilde: You may purchase this or read the text online at <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/844/844-h/844-h.htm>. You will need to read and annotate this play. We will have a Socratic Circle for this play. You must have the following requirements to participate: (The additional 30pts will come from participation in the circle.)

#### The Importance of Being Earnest Socratic Circle Requirements

1. 1 paragraph - discuss/explain your opinion of the story as a whole. 5pts
2. Formulate leveled questions for discussion: 5 level 2s and 3 level 3s. (See attached handout for explanation of levels) 16pts
3. Choose 3 quotes from the play and include a discussion of why each is significant. 24pts
4. 1 paragraph each: discussion of each of the five major characters + Tone and Theme of the play. 25pts

## Guidelines for the Dialectical Journal

Dialectic means “the art or practice of arriving at the truth by using conversation involving question and answer.” The “dialectic” was the method Socrates used to teach his students how to be actively engaged in the struggle to obtain meaning from an unfamiliar and challenging work. A dialectical journal is a written conversation with yourself about a piece of literature that encourages the habit of reflective questioning. You will use a double-entry form to examine details of a passage and synthesize your understanding of the text.

**\*\*\*Any assistance from the Internet, movies, or secondary sources such as Sparknotes or Cliff Notes will be viewed as cheating.\*\*\***

Instructions:

- (1) You may use a notebook or loose-leaf paper.
- (2) Fold pages in half vertically or draw a vertical line down the middle of the page.
- (3) Label the top of each column: left TEXT and right RESPONSE
- (4) In the TEXT column cite passages verbatim from the novel, including quotation marks and **page numbers**. You may shorten long passages, but be sure to write the beginning and end along with the page numbers.
  - a. Choose two passages from each chapter
  - b. When should you write passages down?
    - i. You come across details that seem important to you.
    - ii. You have an epiphany.
    - iii. You learn something significant about a character.
    - iv. You recognize a pattern (overlapping images, repetitions of idea, details etc.).
    - v. You agree or disagree with something a character says or does.
    - vi. You find an interesting or potentially significant quotation.
    - vii. You notice something important or relevant about the writer’s style.
    - viii. You notice effective use of literary devices.
- (5) In the RESPONSE column reflect upon the passages.
  - a. Raise **questions** about the beliefs and values implied in the text.
  - b. Give your personal reactions to the passage, the characters, the situation.
  - c. Discuss the words, ideas, or actions of the author or character.
  - d. Tell what it reminds you of from your own experiences.
  - e. Compare the text to other characters or novels.
  - f. Discuss **literary elements** and how they are used.
  - g. Make connections to any **themes** that are revealed to you.
  - h. Make connections among passages or sections of the work.
  - i. Make predictions about characters’ futures.
  - j. DO NOT MERELY SUMMARIZE THE PLOT!**
- (6) Each RESPONSE must be at least **80** words. Include a word count in parenthesis after your entry.
- (7) You must have at least **1** entry per chapter. You may have more if you feel that you need it.
- (8) Write down your thoughts, questions, insights, and ideas while you read or immediately after reading a chapter so the information is fresh.
- (9) As you take notes, you should regularly reread the previous pages of notes and comments.

Rubric:	Level 4	Level 3	Level 2	Level 1
<b>Quotations &amp; Plot Details</b>	Detailed, meaningful	Less detailed but still good	Few good details	Hardly and good details
<b>Interpretation</b>	Thoughtful, avoids clichés	Intelligent, discusses theme	Vague, unsupported, plot summary	Plot summaries and paraphrases
<b>Literary Elements</b>	Discusses diction, imagery, syntax, etc and how these contribute to meaning	Includes them but doesn’t explain how they contribute to meaning	Lists literary elements but little discussion of meaning	Few literary elements, almost no discussion of meaning
<b>Questions and Connections</b>	Insightful, personal connections, thought-provoking questions	Some personal connections, questions arise from text	Few connections, obvious question	Few connections, no questions

<b>Coverage of Text</b>	Covers text thoroughly	Covers important parts thoroughly	Covers most parts, but quickly	Way too short
<b>Presentation</b>	Neat, organized, looks professional	Neat and readable, follows directions	Neat but hard to read, doesn't follow directions	Hard to read, doesn't follow directions

## **Basic tenets of existentialism, according to Bigelow:**

The **existential** philosophy emphasizes the existence of the individual person as a free and responsible agent determining their own development through acts of the will. There are six basic tenants of that philosophy that you should keep in mind while reading *Grendel*:

### **a. " Existence before Essence "**

Traditionally, people believed that humans were created by God (or another deity), so our "essence" – the thing that makes us human—our characteristics, forms, nature—came first, because God thought of those things before God created humans. Since most existentialists are atheists (they don't believe in God), they assume that we exist first, and then through the course of our lives, our essence is formed as we grow and develop and have experiences.

### **b. "Reason is impotent to deal with the depths of human life"**

In his Myth of Phaedrus, Plato describes the human mind as a chariot, pulled by two horses: one that represents emotion, and one that represents the appetites (physical, sexual, etc). Reason, or logic, is the driver of the chariot and controls those two horses when they try take over. This is what we call the *Platonian* view of man—logic/reason can conquer all.

From the existentialist point of view, reason (logic) is good and everything, but it's not enough. Plato thought that we, as humans, have two parts to our brains—the upper (intellect) and the lower (our more basic, primal desires—eat, sleep, procreate, emotions).

Reason, traditionally, was seen to be the bridge that connects these two, so it was the best thing. But, we have to accept all the parts of ourselves. When this happens, sometimes the lower emotions take over, and no amount of thought can undo that. Sometimes we can't just think through an event or problem.

### **c. Alienation or Estrangement**

The existentialists thought that we'd spent too much time separating the upper and lower parts of our brain—too much time being scientific (think about it—science is pure reason. You leave your emotions at the door), and now we're paying the price by being estranged from all the things that are supposed to connect us together. Kierkegaard (an existentialist philosopher) said that we can only make sense of our life overall when we view it in context of her personal conduct, values, and relationships with others. Obviously, if we're estranged from the people around us, nature, God, and ourselves, we won't be able to make sense of our life.

\* from God.

\* from Nature.

\* from Others in Society.

\*from Self.

Because of science, we aren't as connected as we used to be. We are more distracted, and so we can't connect with people, God, ourselves, or nature any more.

#### **d. Fear, trembling, and anxiety**

“Our tragedy today is a general and universal physical fear so long sustained by now that we can even bear it. There are no longer problems of the spirit. There is only one question: When will I be blown up?” –William Faulkner at his Nobel Prize

In the Faulkner's time, there were a whole host of external reasons to be fearful and anxious: WWI, the Great Depression, WWII, the Holocaust, nuclear threats, environmental crises, terrorism—just to name a few.

Also, remember the first tenet: as I live my life, I figure out who I am. This knowledge that "I" define the "self" results in "the dizziness of freedom" and "fear and trembling." It is a great responsibility to create a person, yet that is exactly what each human does -- creates a self. This self is independent from all other knowledge and "truths" defined by other individuals.

#### **e. The Encounter with Nothingness**

If man is alienated from nature, God, neighbors, and self...what is left? People who seemingly have “everything” feel empty, uneasy, discontented. We get kind of freaked out when we realize there's nothing left. Realizing this nothingness makes us feel uncomfortable. However, existentialists believe we have to encounter this nothingness to be able to go beyond it and create our self.

#### **f. Freedom after Despair**

After the encounter with nothingness, we stop freaking out and realize the freedom that we have. Because there is no God (according to the existentialists), we are completely free to create ourselves—I can be whatever I want to be. With this freedom comes heavy responsibility—I'm responsible for the person I become, and just because I have the freedom to be great doesn't mean that I actually will be great or virtuous. So with freedom I have a commitment to make myself into a person, and I have to take responsibility for the person I become.

## **Questioning Levels**

Questioning levels are based on the type of mental response necessary to provide an acceptable and accurate answer. Each level requires more complexity.

1. Factual – Soliciting reasonably simple, straight forward answers based on obvious facts or awareness. These are usually at the lowest level of cognitive (thinking) or affective (feeling) processes and answers are frequently either right or wrong.

Example: Name the Shakespeare play about the Prince of Denmark?

2. Convergent – Answers to these types of questions are usually within a very finite range of acceptable accuracy. These may be at several different levels of cognition — comprehension, application, analysis, or ones where the answerer makes inferences or conjectures based on personal awareness, or on material read, presented or known.

Example: On reflecting over the entirety of the play Hamlet, what were the main reasons why Ophelia went mad? (This is not specifically stated in the text of Hamlet. Here the reader must make simple inferences.)

3. Divergent – These questions allow you to explore different avenues and create many different variations and alternative answers or scenarios. Correctness may be based on logical projections, may be contextual, or arrived at through basic knowledge, conjecture, inference, projection, creation, intuition, or imagination. These types of questions often require you to analyze, evaluate, or synthesize a knowledge base and then project or predict different outcomes. Often correctness is determined subjectively based on the possibility or probability of the proposed answer.

Example: In the love relationship of Hamlet and Ophelia, what might have happened to their relationship and their lives if Hamlet had not been so obsessed with the revenge of his father's death?

4. Evaluative – These types of questions usually require sophisticated levels of cognitive and/or emotional (affective) judgment. In attempting to answer these types of questions, you may be combining multiple cognitive and/or affective processes or levels, frequently in comparative frameworks. Often an answer is analyzed at multiple levels and from different perspectives before the answerer arrives at newly synthesized information or conclusions.

Examples:

- a. How are the deaths of Ophelia and Juliet the same and yet different? (Compare and contrast.)
- b. What are the similarities and differences between Roman gladiatorial games and modern football?
- c. Why and how might the concept of Piagetian schema be related to the concepts presented in Jungian personality theory, and why might this be important to consider in teaching and learning?

5. Combinations – These are questions that blend any combination of the above.