

College Prep World Literature Summer Reading Assignment

College Prep World Literature and Composition provides an important foundation for future high school Advanced Placement English courses. It is the preparatory class for AP courses in language and literature taken in the junior and senior years. The primary aim of this course is to build skills in writing, thinking, and speaking about literature. This is an **honors course**.

This summer reading assignment is intended to help prepare you for your journey through College Prep World Lit. One of the expectations of this course is that you demonstrate **critical thinking** about the literature we read. This summer reading assignment is a chance to practice this skill, to keep you reading over the almost three months you are out of school, and to expose you to literature from different regions of the world.

Your assignment is to read one novel/play/collection of stories and complete a think piece (see the assignment below). You may choose any novel/collection of stories written by a worldly author that takes place outside of the United States and is a minimum of 150 pages in length. *It must be a work of fiction*. Need some title suggestions? Check out our list on the last page of this document. While you are only asked to read one novel or play or collection of stories, please feel free to read more. The more you can read over the summer, the better!

Possible Authors/Titles

Socorro Aciole: *The Head of the Saint*
Chinua Achebe: *Things Fall Apart, Arrow of God, No Longer at Ease*
Isabel Allende: *The House of the Spirits, Daughter of Fortune, Ines of My Soul*
Margaret Atwood: *The Year of the Flood, The Handmaid's Tale, Alias Grace*
Jane Austin: *Pride and Prejudice, Emma*
Samuel Beckett: *Murphy*
Jorge Luis Borges: *The Book of Sand and Shakespeare's Memory, Labyrinths*
Charlotte Bronte: *Jane Eyre*
Emily Bronte: *Wuthering Heights*
Albert Camus: *The Plague, The Stranger, The Fall*
Miquel Cervantes: *Don Quixote*
Anton Chekhov: *Stories of Anton Chekhov*
Liu Cixin: *The Three-Body Problem*
Paulo Coelho: *The Alchemist, By the River Piedra I Sat Down and Wept, The Pilgrimage*
J. M. Coetzee: *Disgrace, Life and Times of Michael K*
Arthur Conan Doyle: *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*
Tsitsi Dangarembga: *Nervous Conditions, The Book of Not*
Charles Dickens: *A Tale of Two Cities, Great Expectations, Oliver Twist*
Fyodor Dostoyevsky: *Crime and Punishment*
Alexandre Dumas: *The Man in the Iron Mask, The Count of Monte Cristo*
Laura Esquivel: *Like Water for Chocolate, The Law of Love, Malinche*
Gustave Flaubert: *Madame Bovary*
Elena Ferrante: *My Brilliant Friend*
Melanie J. Fishbane: *Maud*
Timothee de Fombelle: *The Book of Pearl*
Carlos Fuentes: *Destiny and Desire, The Death of Artemio Cruz*
Gabriel Garcia-Marquez: *Love in the Time of Cholera, One Hundred Years of Solitude*
Nadine Gordimer: *The Pickup, The Conservationist, Burger's Daughter*
Khaled Hosseini: *The Kite Runner, And the Mountains Echoed*
Victor Hugo: *Les Miserables, The Hunchback of Notre Dame*
James Joyce: *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man, Ulysses*

Franz Kafka: *The Trial, The Metamorphosis*
Rudyard Kipling: *The Jungle Book, Indian Tales*
Kamala Markandaya: *Nectar in a Sieve*
Alice Munro: *Runaway, The Moons of Jupiter*
R. K. Narayan: *The Guide*
Michael Ondaatje: *Running in the Family, The English Patient*
Octavio Paz: *In Light of India*
Ayn Rand: *The Fountainhead, Atlas Shrugged*
Erich Remarque: *The Road Back, Arch of Triumph, All Quiet on the Western Front*
Jean Rhys: *Wide Sargasso Sea*
Salmon Rushdie: *Midnight's Children, Shame*
Marjane Satrapi: *The Complete Persepolis: Volumes 1 and 2*
Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn: *A Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich, Cancer Ward*
Elie Wiesel: *A Mad Desire to Dance, The Forgotten*
Oscar Wilde: *The Picture of Dorian Gray*

On the first day of class (in August or January), please be prepared to share your reactions to the book you read and to turn in your think piece.

Think Piece Assignment

After reading your selected novel/play/collection of stories, you will complete a written reflection known as a think piece. The think piece is intended to provide you an opportunity to generate reflective and substantial thinking on the issues raised by your reading. Your writing should demonstrate your *best thinking* in response to the questions/topics provided and be *supported with specific, relevant evidence* (including quotes) from the novel or play. The think piece will be **500 words** (you should be within 10 words of this total), typed, double-spaced, and in a 12-point font with an MLA heading. Please include a word count at the end of your piece.

Organization: Other than being logically organized into paragraphs, a think piece has no set structure; you are not writing a traditional thesis driven essay or presenting an argument; you are simply explaining your thought process about the text you have read.

Support: Use examples and quotations from the text to support what you say. A **minimum of three brief quotes** must be included. Effective quotations make the think piece stronger and more convincing. Correctly citing quotations according to MLA style lends you more credibility as a writer.

Content: Avoid plot summary. Do not recap the plot of the text. Your writing needs to reflect your thinking about the text rather than retelling the story (the author already covered this task).

A think piece analyzes character, plot, use of language, themes, descriptions, setting, historical information, foreshadowing, changes in character, important elements of history, cultural ideas that are in the text, and anything you notice that is interesting or engaging. You may write your entire piece about one element of the text, or you may discuss more than one element. Make sure that your discussion of the element(s) is thoroughly developed.

Use the assignment to express more than how you “feel” about the text. Whether you liked the text or not is relevant but should not be the central focus of your think piece.

Focus: The focus of your think piece is up to you, but one of the prompts below *may* serve as a focus or jumping-off point for your piece.

Possible Think Piece Prompts

- Choose a complex and important character in your novel or a play who might, on the basis of the character's actions alone, be considered evil or immoral. Explain both how and why the full presentation of the character in the work makes readers react more sympathetically than they otherwise might.
- In retrospect, the reader often discovers that the first chapter of a novel introduces some of the major themes of the work. Write about the first chapter of the novel and explain how the chapter functions to set forth major themes.
- An effective literary work does not merely stop or cease; it concludes. In the view of some critics, a work that does not provide the pleasure of significant closure has terminated with an artistic fault. A satisfactory ending is not, however, always conclusive in every sense; significant closure may require the reader to abide with or adjust to ambiguity and uncertainty. Discuss the ending of the novel or play and explain precisely how and why the ending appropriately or inappropriately concludes the work.
- A critic has said that one important measure of a superior work of literature is its ability to produce in the reader a healthy confusion of pleasure and disquietude. Discuss how this novel or play produces this "healthy confusion." Explain the sources of the "pleasure and disquietude" experienced by the readers of the work.
- In his essay "Walking," Henry David Thoreau offers the following assessment of literature: "In literature it is only the wild that attracts us. Dullness is but another name for tameness. It is the uncivilized free and wild thinking in *Hamlet* and the *Iliad*, in all scriptures and mythologies, not learned in schools, that delights us." Discuss how you initially thought the novel or play was conventional and tame but how you now value the text for its "uncivilized free and wild thinking." Explain what constitutes its "uncivilized free and wild thinking" and how that thinking is central to the value of the work as a whole.
- The British novelist Fay Weldon offers this observation about happy endings: "The writers, I do believe, who get the best and most lasting response from readers are the writers who offer a happy ending through moral development. By a happy ending, I do not mean mere fortunate events...a marriage or a last-minute rescue from death...but some kind of spiritual reassessment or moral reconciliation, even with the self, even at death." Discuss how the novel or play has the kind of ending Weldon describes. Identify the "spiritual reassessment or moral reconciliation" evident in the ending and explain its significance in the work as a whole.

Printed or handwritten Think Piece due on the first day of class (either August or January).

Questions?

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