

AP English Literature/ Composition (12th Grade): 2009 - 2010

Read: *How to Read Literature Like A Professor* (Foster), **AND one of the following:** *Catch-22* (Heller) **OR** *Crime and Punishment* (Dostoevsky) **OR** *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (Twain).

AP English Literature & Composition (12th):

In addition to reading the texts, these are the summer reading assignments:

1. Keep a Double Entry Reading Reflections Journal of your reactions/reflections/thoughts to **both** books. Respond to at least ten (10) specific pages or passages from each work. Note the pages/passages being responded to by page number. Include date of reflection for each entry. (Do not just summarize.)
2. Write a paragraph describing each author's writing style, including three (3) distinct adjectives to characterize the style; support your personal beliefs with specific textual examples (quote lines/pages for each example) for each adjective.
3. Create **three (3) essay questions** (only for the fiction piece of literature read) that have no answers (and do not appear in *Monarch/Spark/Cliff/ Barron's Notes*, etc. or any other source) and that **reveal the depth of your thoughts about the work**. You do not answer these, just write the questions. (For help, look at Bloom's Taxonomy: questions should be on the Evaluation, Synthesis or Analysis levels.)

Summer Reading Assignments must be submitted on the third day of class, in a folder with identified separate sections for each question. Typing is not mandatory, but neatness counts. Use INK (blue or black only) or type. (*The number in parentheses next to some titles is the Lexile score, a developmental scale for reading ranging from below 200L for beginning-reader material to above 1700L for advanced text. Check www.lexile.com for more information.)

"How To Read Literature Like a Professor": What does it mean when a fictional hero takes a journey? Shares a meal? Gets drenched in a sudden rain shower? Often, there is much more going on in a novel or poem than is readily visible on the surface—a symbol, maybe, that remains elusive, or an unexpected twist on a character—and there's that sneaking suspicion that the deeper meaning of a literary text keeps escaping you. In this practical and amusing guide to literature, Thomas C. Foster shows how easy and gratifying it is to unlock those hidden truths, and to discover a world where a road leads to a quest; a shared meal may signify a communion; and rain, whether cleansing or destructive, is never just rain." (from Barnes and Noble book review)

"Crime and Punishment" is a novel by Russian author Fyodor Dostoevsky, first published in 1866. It focuses on the mental anguish and moral dilemmas of Rodion Raskolnikov, an impoverished St. Petersburg ex-student who formulates and executes a plan to kill a hated, unscrupulous pawnbroker seemingly for her money, thereby solving his financial problems and at the same time, he argues, ridding the world of an evil worthless parasite. Raskolnikov also strives to be an extraordinary being, similar to Napoleon, believing that murder is permissible in pursuit of a higher purpose. After the bungled murder Raskolnikov falls into a feverish state and behaves as though he wishes to betray himself, and the detective Porfiry begins to suspect him purely on psychological grounds. At the same time, a chaste relationship develops between Raskolnikov and Sonia, a prostitute full of Christian virtue. Raskolnikov confesses his crime to her. The confession is overheard by Svidrigaylov, a shadowy figure, but then he unexpectedly commits suicide and Raskolnikov must decide what to do." (from Wikipedia) (Lexile Level: 990)

"Catch-22": The author served as an Air Force bombardier in World War II. The novel draws heavily on his Air Force experience and presents a war story that is at once hilarious, grotesque, cynical, and stirring. The novel generated a great deal of controversy upon its initial publication in 1961. It presents an utterly unsentimental vision of war, stripping all romantic pretenses away from combat, replacing visions of glory and honor with a kind of nightmarish comedy of violence, bureaucracy, and paradoxical madness. Unlike other anti-romantic war novels, *Catch-22* relies heavily on humor to convey the insanity of war, presenting armed conflict through a kind of

desperate absurdity rather than through graphic depictions of suffering and violence. *Catch-22* also distinguishes itself from other anti-romantic war novels through its core values: the story of Yossarian, the protagonist, is ultimately not one of despair but one of hope. He believes that the positive urge to live and to be free can redeem the individual from the dehumanizing machinery of war. The novel is told as a series of loosely related, tangential stories in no particular chronological order. The narrative that emerges from this structural tangle upholds the value of the individual; at every stage it mocks insincerity and hypocrisy, even when such values appear triumphant. *Catch-22* is a novel about the moral choices that every person must make.” (from *Spark Notes*) (Lexile Level: 1140)

“*Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* by Mark Twain was first published in 1884. It is commonly regarded one of the Great American Novels, and is one of the first major American novels written in the vernacular, characterized by local color regionalism. The book is noted for its colorful description of people and places along the Mississippi River. By satirizing a Southern antebellum society that was already anachronistic at the time of its publication, the book is an often scathing look at entrenched attitudes, particularly racism. The drifting journey of Huck and his friend Jim, a runaway slave, down the Mississippi River on their raft may be one of the most enduring images of escape and freedom in all of American literature. The text’s language has sometimes been criticized as being coarse; its use of racial stereotypes and language contemporary to the 1880s has also caused some people concern.” (from Wikipedia) (Lexile Level: 990)

(Connection to the Georgia Performance Standards: The student reads a minimum of 25 grade-level books or book equivalents (approximately 1,000,000 words) per year from a variety of subject disciplines. The student reads both informational and fictional texts in a variety of genres and modes of discourse, including technical texts related to various subject areas.)