

AP Literature and Composition 2007-2008

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### **Summer Reading Requirements**

**Summer reading and journals are required for this class.**

You will need to drop off all your summer reading journals to me. The due date is **AUGUST 6th**. If you are out of town on the due date, you must submit journals early or via email by August 7th.

The journal should have three separate sections with the following divisions:

**PART 1:** A précis of each book: a précis is a careful summary of the basic ideas of the work without too much detail, reason, or illustrations. Include all of the following information in outline form:

I. Settings

II. Characters with key quotations said by or about the main characters

III. Themes

IV. Plot Summary (four to five sentences maximum)

V. Unique literary devices (symbolism, allusions, irony, framework narrative, etc.)

\*\*\*Note: If you buy your own copies of the text, you should highlight, write in the margins, and generally make notes inside the text which reflect the above requirements. By writing your précis and adding copious notes in your text, you will be prepared for class discussion when we incorporate these summer reading texts throughout the semester. **IN THE FIRST TWO WEEKS OF THE SEMESTER, EITHER FALL OR SPRING, WE WILL COVER THE SUMMER READING TEXTS. YOUR FIRST ESSAY WILL CONCERN ONE OF THESE TEXT. BE SPECIFIC AND DETAILED IN YOUR JOURNALS.**

**PART 2:** Five essay style questions written by you about each work. These questions are the most important measure of the depth of thought given by the reader to the text. You only have to write the questions, not the answers. The best questions are the ones for which you have no answers. Do not write questions that can be answered with a few words, phrases, or sentences. Consider “how” and “why” questions. The summer journal should be in a folder or binder when you submit it. You will add to it as the year unfolds. The second grade for the semester will be a test concerning each of the selections.

**PART 3:** The first week of class, given which semester this class will be offered, you will be given AP Examination style questions based on your summer reading selections. These questions will test both your close reading skills and your ability to write about important literature.

Required Summer Reading List:

*A Prayer for Owen Meany* -- John Irving - Funny, touching and long. You should probably take on this one first. The road to self-discovery is often a tortuous one. Pay attention to motifs and religious references; make notes about how both devices shape meaning.

*Slaughterhouse Five* – Kurt Vonnegut - This story is about war only as Vonnegut can write about it. Pay attention to narrative style and how narrative technique helps or confuses you in your understanding of the novel. Your journals should reflect this interaction with the text.

*The Handmaid's Tale* – Margaret Atwood – See what you make of this. Atwood is a feminist. After reading this novel, what are the various perspectives a reader may approach this novel? Do you think your own gender shapes your experience of the text?

*Hundred Years of Solitude* - Gabriel Garcia Marquez – This post-modern work is a seminal Latin American novel. No one should go through life without reading it.

Semester Reading List (In case you want to get a jump on ordering the text for the semester!)

- *Siddhartha* – Herman Hesse
- *Heart of Darkness* – Joseph Conrad
- *Waiting for the Barbarians* – J. M. Coetzee
- *Song of Solomon* - Toni Morrison
- *The Sound and The Fury* - William Faulkner

\*\*\* NOTE: I will be available at the above email after July 1st should you have any questions.