

Summer Reading Assignment AP English Class 2009-2010

Congratulations on being enrolled as a student in Advanced Placement English. Because education is a year-round endeavor, for your course of study you need to **read two books** over the summer.

By the first day of school, you should have read:

The Poisonwood Bible by Barbara Kingsolver

Baptist missionary Nathan Price takes his American family to the Belgian Congo in 1959. Each family member tells the ensuing action, taking turns narrating the chapters; we get to know the characters through their own voices as well as through those of the other family members. In addition to the dynamics of the family's interactions with each other and with the experiences of living in a strange geographic location, we get a picture of the politics of an African nation and its people taking their first steps toward independence in the modern world.

Or

A Prayer for Owen Meany by John Irving

This is another end of the 20th Century novel, this time focusing on growing up in the post-World War II era in New England. Irving brings us the engaging (and the bizarre) character Owen Meany as a reflection of the intersections of history, religion, culture, fate, and, even, baseball. Love him or hate him, you will not soon forget Owen Meany as he works towards completing his own personal quest.

And

How to Read Literature Like a Professor by Thomas C. Foster

Back Cover: 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.

You may purchase these books at Off the Beaten Path or Epilogue Book Co. with a 10% discount, or you may borrow copies from the school Library. After the last week of school, Bud Werner Library will have a number of copies on hand, too.

The writing assignment is included in this packet. It is required on the first day of class.

REQUIRED WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT FOR EITHER *THE POISONWOOD BIBLE* OR *A PRAYER FOR OWEN MEANEY*

Summer Reading Homework - due on the first day of school

You will be keeping an **interactive notebook** on the summer reading you choose. This notebook will act as a portfolio on your individual learning; you should be actively reading and interacting with your choice book through this process. You will need a notebook (a composition notebook or a spiral notebook), which you may continue to use as a journal in your English class.

Your teachers will be looking for a **minimum of 10 pages filled out in your notebook** (see attached example - two pages worth of information).

Organize your notebook using this method.

- Open up the notebook so you have a left and a right hand page.
- Make sure you record the date, title of your choice book, and page numbers you read for this entry on the left hand side of the notebook.
- On the right hand side of the notebook, you may take notes, summarize the section of reading, record quotes.
- On the left hand side of the notebook, you may be more creative: express opinions and feelings, discuss symbolism, favorite characters and why, what you would do in that situation, drawings of the setting or characters, personal reflections.

Options for the left-hand page of the notebook	Options for the right-hand page of the notebook
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Process new ideas and think things through • Reflection on quotes • Personal reflections and thoughts • Poetry you found/created that relate • Cartoons that relate to the book • "what if" hypothetical situations • Questions • How you relate personally - comparison to your own life • Reminds you of other books, movies, stories and why • Reactions to the characters and situations in the book • Favorites or things you hate about the book and why • Symbolism you notice • What you would do if you were in that situation or if you were that person • Drawings of the characters and setting • Venn diagram contrasting characters • Make a metaphor/simile to help you understand the character or situation. • Any creative connection to the book 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading notes • Summary of the section you just finished reading • Facts • Quotes from the book that you want to reflect on or you feel are significant • Important events in the book • Timeline • Lists and descriptions of characters

Required Writing Assignment for *How To Read Literature Like a Professor*

After reading both books, you will apply what you have learned from *How Read Literature Like a Professor* to either *Poisonwood Bible* or *A Prayer for Owen Meany*. Write or type your responses to the following questions and topics.

Introduction: How'd He Do That?

How do memory, symbol, and pattern affect the reading of literature? How does the recognition of patterns make it easier to read complicated literature? Discuss a time when your appreciation of a literary work was enhanced by understanding symbol or pattern

Chapter 1 -- Every Trip Is a Quest (Except When It's Not)

List the five aspects of the QUEST and then apply them to *Owen Meany* or *Poisonwood*.

Chapter 2 -- Nice to Eat with You: Acts of Communion

Choose a meal from *Owen Meany* or *Poisonwood* and apply the ideas of Chapter 2 to this literary depiction.

Chapter 3: --Nice to Eat You: Acts of Vampires

What are the essentials of the vampire story? Apply this to *Owen Meany* or *Poisonwood Bible*.

Chapter 5 --Now, Where Have I Seen Her Before?

Define intertextuality. Discuss three examples that have helped you in reading specific works.

Chapter 7 -- ...Or the Bible

Discuss the biblical allusions in *Poisonwood* and *Owen Meany*

Chapter 10 -- It's More Than Just Rain or Snow

Discuss the importance of weather in a specific *Poisonwood* or *Owen Meany*, not in terms of plot.

Chapter 11 --...More Than It's Gonna Hurt You: Concerning Violence

Present example of violence found in *Poisonwood* or *Owen Meany*. Show how the effects are different.

Chapter 12 -- Is That a Symbol?

What symbols have you recognized in *Poisonwood* or *Owen Meany*.

Chapter 13 -- It's All Political

Assume that Foster is right and "it is all political." Use his criteria to show that *Poisonwood* or *Owen Meany* is political.

Chapter 14 -- Yes, She's a Christ Figure, Too

Apply the criteria on page 119 to a major character in a significant literary work. Try to choose a character that will have many matches. This is a particularly apt tool for analyzing film -- for example, *Star Wars*, *Cool Hand Luke*, *Excalibur*, *Malcolm X*, *Braveheart*, *Spartacus*, *Gladiator* and *Ben-Hur*.

Interlude -- One Story

Write your own definition for archetype. Then identify an archetypal story and apply it to a literary work with which you are familiar..

Have a Great Summer!

If you have questions feel free to contact Ms. Gabriel at 970-846-6786 or jgabriel@sssd.k12.co.us

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