



## CENTRAL BUCKS SCHOOL DISTRICT

### *LEADING THE WAY*

The Central Bucks Schools will provide all students with the academic and problem-solving skills essential for personal development, responsible citizenship, and life-long learning.

June 1, 2019

Dear Student:

Congratulations on being accepted into the AP English and Literature Course at Central Bucks High School South! I am looking forward to working with you next year! As you probably know, AP English is a course that involves an intense amount of reading as well as thinking, analyzing, and writing about what you've read. With that in mind, we expect that you will dedicate many hours to preparing for the course over the summer. Use and budget your time accordingly.

Your summer assignment has **three parts** and it involves working with three books. I encourage you to buy your own copy of all three books, enabling you to mark them up as you note the following: important scenes, passages connected to theme, keys to characterization, character foils, symbols, and/or any other literary element, noteworthy writing, stylistic observations, questions, comments, reactions, and connections.

#### **Part 1: Learn How to Read Closely**

**DUE ON THE FIRST DAY OF CLASS**

Read Thomas C. Foster's *How to Read Literature Like a Professor*. Please purchase this book in particular, as we will use it periodically in class throughout the school year. Annotate your copy (with post-it notes or marginal notes but be sure to make clear **why** you selected the passage) when you encounter any of the following: exceptional examples of analysis, instructional examples that you find noteworthy, and/or examples of techniques you've used in the past when analyzing texts. Use Foster's strategies when working on Part 2.

#### **Part 2: Read and Analyze a "Work of Considerable Literary Merit"**

**DUE August 15th, 2019 by 2pm**

Before selecting one of the following books, investigate each title and author so that you're likely to enjoy closely working with the book, even rereading the book, as you complete the written assignment.

*White Noise* by Don DeLillo

*Billy Lynn's Long Halftime Walk* by Ben Fountain

*Blind Assassin* by Margaret Atwood

*Atonement* by Ian McEwan

On the first day of school, bring the novel itself, any notes, annotations, and/or outline(s) that you used to write your essay.

The essay, however, is due on **Thursday August 15th by 2 p.m.** You must hand deliver it to the office. There will be a box labeled AP Literature (Grade 12) in which you should deposit your work. At 2pm on August 15th, I will collect all work from the labeled box. **Late work will NOT be accepted.** Should your summer plans have you out of town on August 15th, *be prepared to submit the work early. NO ESSAYS will be accepted via e-mail.*

Carefully read the work of literary merit (either DeLillo, Atwood, McEwan, or Fountain) and then plan and write an essay about the work in which you respond to **one** of the following prompts: (note, select a prompt that best represents and addresses the concepts of your chosen novel). Naturally, some of these prompts work better with certain titles. **The prompts are taken from the AP open ended question bank, which can be found on the CollegeBoard site.**

- In a novel by William Styron, a father tells his son that life “is a search for justice.” Choose a character from a novel or play who responds in some significant way to justice or injustice. Then write a well-developed essay in which you analyze the character’s understanding of justice, the degree to which the character’s search for justice is successful, and the significance of this search for the work as a whole.
- Morally ambiguous characters – characters whose behavior discourages readers from identifying them as purely evil or purely good – are at the heart of many works of literature. From the novel you read, identify a morally ambiguous character who plays a pivotal role. Then write an essay in which you explain how the character can be viewed as morally ambiguous and why his or her moral ambiguity is significant to the work as a whole. Avoid mere plot summary.
- A recurring theme in literature is the classic war between a passion and responsibility. For instance, a personal cause, a love, a desire for revenge, a determination to redress a wrong, or some other emotion or drive may conflict with moral duty. Choose a literary work in which a character confronts the demands of a private passion that conflicts with his or her responsibilities. In a well written essay show clearly the nature of the conflict, its effects upon the character, and its significance to the work.
- In Kate Chopin’s *The Awakening* (1899), protagonist Edna Pontellier is said to possess “That outward existence which conforms, the inward life that questions.” In a novel or play that you have studied, identify a character who outwardly conforms while questioning inwardly. Then write an essay in which you analyze how this tension between outward conformity and inward questioning contributes to the meaning of the work. Avoid mere plot summary.

Lastly, two important notes: Your essay should reflect your own thinking, reading, and analysis of the work; in other words, avoid study guides! Finally, avoid summarizing the plot in your analytical essay. Should you have any questions or concerns, please email me. I do check email on a regular basis over the summer.

### Part 3: Return to the Classics

**DUE ON THE FIRST DAY OF CLASS**

*Note: you will be quizzed on this material during the first few weeks of school.*

Webster's Collegiate defines **allusion** as an implied or indirect reference to another literary work or event in history or in literature. Keeping in mind that we will read Homer's *Odyssey*, and Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex*, as well as contemporary poetry, Renaissance poetry, and everything in between, your knowledge and understanding of Greek mythology will be crucial to your sophisticated understanding of many of the works we read in the course. With that in mind, your assignment is to **read Edith Hamilton's *Mythology***, an anthology of classical Greek myths. Use 5x8 note cards to **create a recipe file** of sorts. On each card, include the title of each story, a **50 word summary**, and a **100-150 word commentary** on the piece, which may include conflict, significance, general analysis, and the like. **Read Parts 1-6**, but note that your cards (totaling approximately 25 cards- this is a rough guide; note that there are more stories/characters than this, thus you will have to winnow important study worthy stories from minor or less important ones) should come from the following sections **only**:

Part One: The Gods, the Creation, and the Earliest Heroes

Part Two: Stories of Love and Adventure

Part Three: The Great Heroes before the Trojan War

Part Five: The Great Families of Mythology

*\* See the attached example for what a summary and commentary looks like. Note, that your commentary should provide evidence of thinking, connecting, and engagement with these myths. Move beyond summary, and begin to think critically about our modern world as a reflection of a Greek tradition. Ever heard someone say you "have a Midas touch" or do you know our school mascot's history (titans)? What might these myths reveal about values, connections, and transcending ideas throughout human thought?*

**Optional for Part 3:** Use a color-coding system (different color cards or different color stickers to label the cards) to divide the myths thematically/topically. Use a recipe card-holder with dividers to organize your cards.

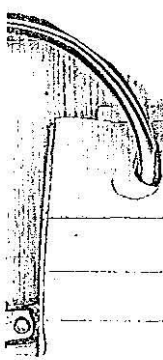
Should you have any questions or concerns, please email us well in advance of any due dates. Additionally, you'll find this assignment posted on the English Dept. website for CB South or Tannous' website.

Sincerely,



Ms. Jennifer Tannous

[jtannous@cbsd.org](mailto:jtannous@cbsd.org)



Notecards can be handwritten or typed. Here is a strong example of summary and analysis of a story:

Demeter (Ceres)

Demeter's only daughter, Persephone, is captured by Hades and taken down to the underworld. Out of grief, Demeter does not allow any crop to grow, and it seems like all the humans will die of famine. Zeus orders for Persephone to be returned, but Hades feeds her a pomegranate seed before she leaves, so she will have to return to him for four months every year. These months are the winter, when no crops grow, for Demeter is grieving for her daughter.

I think that this story in particular shows the importance of Demeter in the myths. She has known pain, and it is the same pain that many humans have gone through as well – the loss of a child. It seems to make sense that she is connected with the Earth as the goddess of harvest because she is probably the most relatable god to the people on Earth. However, she still retains many of her godly qualities despite her sorrow. For instance, she selfishly leaves all of the Earth's inhabitants to starve because of her own anger and sadness over her own loss, which the humans did not even have anything to do with. I do not think that such a level of self-interest is even possible for humans.