

June 8, 2023

Dear AP English Literature and Composition Student and Parent/s:

I would like to express my pleasure at having the opportunity to work with you this next year in AP Lit! To prepare for this challenging and exciting course, there are a few items you can work on over the summer. Remember, this is a college-level course. Therefore, students can expect a rigorous workload, including more reading, more writing, and deeper analysis on par with a college-level English 101 course.

With this, students often ask what to do to prepare for the year ahead. While the following are NOT required for the first day of school, having work complete beforehand will be helpful, as the *Great Gatsby* work described below will be required to be completed within the first few weeks of school.

First, you can read *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald. This text will be the basis of our introduction into AP Literature next year. As the AP exam is in May, we must push to begin curriculum on day one of our school year. If you have read it before, you have a leg up, as the CollegeBoard suggests you “know a few works well.” If you have not read it before, the language and structure are an excellent pond to dip your toes into for AP. You will interact with this novel through your own system (i.e. sticky notes, double entry journal, Cornell Notes, or another system you like).

Upon the first few days in class, I will provide you two assessments to show your deep reading analysis. One will be in the form of chapter questions. The other will be a Review Guide you will create. (Electronic versions attached below.)

In addition to the above, an optional reading that will aid in your study of our class is the non-fiction guide *How to Read Literature Like a Professor* by Thomas C. Foster. While this is not required reading, it does help students prepare to read with a literary lens throughout the course. Sections of this text are referenced throughout the course. Reading this ahead of the school year will prepare you for the specific thinking and reading skills necessary to develop throughout the year.

Along with these, you will also receive a copy of our textbook *Literature and Composition: Reading, Writing, Thinking 2nd Edition* by Jago, Shea, Scanlon, and Aufses in September.

As we head into next year, I invite you to email me for resources and support. The goal of summer work is to continue to work your literary brain muscles, so you feel prepared to jump right into our class curriculum. If you do not wish to complete the work above during your much-deserved break, I HIGHLY recommend you read literary texts of your choosing that are college level. If you’d like suggestions, see me and/or see Mrs. Moore in the library – she has the approved list!

It is my pleasure to welcome you to an exciting, rewarding academic year in AP Literature and Composition! I look forward to the stimulating ideas you will bring to this classroom.

Sincerely,

Heidi Little
AP English Lit/Comp

Optional Summer Homework: Active Reading Guide

Directions: Use this guide as you interact with the text *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald. At the beginning of the year, you will turn in several pieces for this summer reading, and you will also complete a Free Response Question (FRQ) grounded in this text.

Interacting with the text: As you read, use whatever note-taking system you like to actively engage with the text. In AP, we are not passive readers, we are active readers. Thus, it is expected that you use a range of reading strategies to engage with the text. Some students like sticky notes, others prefer to use a double entry journal or Cornell Notes. Whatever works for you is great. If you don't have a system, email me for suggestions.

Chapter Questions: Complete the questions (next page) for each chapter specifically. You may, of course, answer any of these questions for any of the chapters and are highly encouraged to do so. Some are specific to the given chapter, while others are broader. Still, the root of the questions should help you think about the text more closely and critically as you read.

AP Review Guide: Finally, you will complete the review guide packet of prompts (see the attachment). These prompts are all topics which have appeared on past AP exams. Ultimately, this review guide will be crucial in your preparation for the test in May. You will submit this guide to Turnitin.com upon entering the course in September. *Note: some of the questions you answer in the chapter questions assignment can also be applied to this assignment! You may use the same response. Work smarter, not harder. 😊

Great Gatsby AP Lit Summer HW Questions

Directions: Answer these questions as you finish each chapter. It is a good idea to look up the terms (Setting, POV, etc.) to clarify your understanding of them. You may type or handwrite your responses. Note: There are 9 chapters, but the questions stop at chapter 7.

Chapter 1: Point of View

1. Nick is a first person narrator – no matter what, we question his reliability. To what extent, do we as readers believe Nick's narration? Explain your position with evidence from the text.

Chapter 2: Setting

1. What is the setting in New York? Where do the Buchanans live? Where does Nick live? What seems to be the attitude toward these places?
2. What is the Valley of Ashes like? What is Fitzgerald saying about middle America?
3. Track the weather throughout the novel (you can write it down in bullet points). What are the weather patterns? What events occur when it's hot? When it's raining? Is it ever pleasant?

Chapter 3: Characterization

1. Nick claims he is the most honest man he has ever known. Based on your assessment of the others, do you believe this to be true? Is he dishonest in any way?
2. List three words to describe Tom Buchanan. Then find a piece of textual evidence to support your adjectives. If you use Daisy's descriptors, you must find other evidence to support her assessment of her husband.
3. What rumors have been told about Gatsby? Does Nick believe them? Explain your assessment using the text.
4. Choose Daisy, Jordan, or another character to assess. Explain who this character is based on Fitzgerald's development of him/her.

Chapter 4: Plot

1. What shift has occurred in this section? What events have led up to it? Was this moment satisfying for you? Explain.

Chapter 5: Symbolism

1. The colors white, blue, gold, yellow, and green occur often in this text. What might be their significance? Do not rest solely on traditional meanings.
2. Why does Gatsby stare at the green light? What is its meaning for him? What is its meaning for Americans in general?
3. What is the relevance of the eyes of Dr. T.J. Eckleburg? Why does Fitzgerald include glasses?

Chapter 6: Style

1. Pick a particularly difficult, yet beautiful sentence from the novel. Define the words, pick it apart, and analyze its significance. What about Fitzgerald's style makes it unique? How does his style allow you to grasp his purpose? (Focus on diction, figurative language, and syntax.)

Chapter 7: Theme

1. Develop a theme statement for *The Great Gatsby* – it should be apt, academic, and supported with details from the text. A good idea would be to think of the social commentary Fitzgerald was illuminating and develop a theme from this idea. (Theme = abstract topic + vivid verb + author's attitude)

Name _____ Period _____

AP Review Guide

Directions: This guide is purposefully designed as a practical way to study for the fast-approaching AP Literature test. It will be to your advantage to complete this with an abundant amount of thoughtfulness. Obviously, the more you put into this, the more you will get out of it. Please type your responses (double-space) and adhere to the minimum and maximum line requirements for your typed answers. You will submit this to Turnitin.com, so it is a good idea to save this part as its own document.

1. Title of Work:

Author of Work:

Significance of title: Be specific, making connections to author's theme, important symbolism, etc. (7-10 lines)

2. Significant Author Facts: Style, themes, locations, dates- again, research will be required. (8-12 lines)

3. Major Theme of Piece: (2-4 lines)

4. Secondary Theme and/or Motif: (2-4 lines)

5. Significant Character and Description: Describe using literary terms such as protagonist, Epic Hero, antagonist, foil, stereotypical, dynamic, static, round, flat, etc. Be sure to list at least two driving character traits as well. (6-12 lines)

6. Significant Character and Description #2: (6-12 lines)

7. Minor, but significant Character: Explain significance of the character. (2-4 lines)

8. Main Setting and Significance of Setting: Be specific! Where? When? Connect to an important aspect of the novel or play. (5-10 lines)

9. Point of View and Significance: (2-4 lines)

10. Brief Plot Synopsis: Think in terms of a plot analysis and conflict category. (10-12 lines)

11. Symbol: Significance, how does it relate to theme? (5-12 lines)

12. Irony: Type, significance, how does it relate to theme? (5-12 lines)

Notes on Author Style:

13. Diction: This is much more than word choice. Remember satirical elements. (3-4 lines).

14. Syntax: Consider the narrator's voice versus the voice of the characters. (3-4 lines)

Figurative Language: List at least three uses of figurative language in addition to the symbolism and irony stated above. Explain the author's purpose in using these devices. (4-8 lines)

15.

16.

17.

18. Significant Quotation: Copy, state significance, and memorize: (4-10 lines, depending on quote.)

19. Significant Quotation #2: Copy, state significance, and memorize: (same as above)

20. Reflection paragraph: Write a 10-12 sentence core paragraph about a significant literary device that the author uses to convey a theme. Give a specific example of the use of the device and its effect on the novel as a whole. Remember to quote specific text!