



LHS English Department

AP Literature and Composition | Summer Reading | 2022

Congratulations! You have signed up for senior AP literature and composition, which means you enjoy reading, and you appreciate great literature. We will be reading and reacting to a wide variety of literature throughout the year, including novels, plays, nonfiction, and poems.

An important aspect of this class is having a deep knowledge of numerous works of acknowledged literary merit, which is why I am asking you to get started in the class by reading and reacting to two books before the opening day of school in August:

1. ***How to Read Literature Like a Professor* by Thomas C. Foster** – Begin your summer reading work with this book (read it before *My Antonia*). It is a book for readers who are interested in recognizing the patterns, symbols, and other elements that often make up great stories. Essentially, it is a great introduction to the basics of literary critique/analysis, something every AP Lit student needs to be able to do. You will need to have your own copy of the book to access throughout the year, but I will be asking you to read much of the book before the school year begins.

As you read the book, I will ask you to keep a journal and write in it after at least 10 of the chapters (of your choice) listed below. I would like these journals to be handwritten on notebook paper. In each journal summarize the main point of each chapter, and write a reflection on how a specific book, movie, TV show, game, or something else you are familiar with reflects the ideas in the chapter. Be specific. For example, one chapter is about the significance of weather and environment in stories. Don't just describe how it's raining when Andy breaks out of prison in *The Shawshank Redemption*. Explain what the weather conditions in that scene say about that moment in Andy's journey as a character.

You'll be expected to read all of the following chapters from *How to Read Literature Like a Professor*; reflect in your journal on at least ten of them you choose:

1. Every Trip Is a Quest (Except When It's Not)
2. Nice to Eat with You: Acts of Communion
4. Now, Where Have I Seen Her Before?
9. It's More Than Just Rain or Snow
10. Never Stand Next to the Hero
- Interlude: Does He Mean That?
12. Is That a Symbol?
13. It's All Political
14. Yes, She's a Christ Figure, Too
18. If She Comes Up, It's Baptism
19. Geography Matters
20. So Does Season
- Interlude: One Story
23. It's Never Just Heart Disease... And Rarely Just Illness
24. Don't Read with Your Eyes
25. It's My Symbol and I'll Cry If I Want To
26. Is He Serious? And Other Ironies
27. A Test Case
- Postlude: Who's in Charge Here?

1. ***My Antonia* by Willa Cather** – Read this novel second. It is the story of Antonia told through the eyes of her friend, Jim. Antonia and her family have moved from Bohemia to the western plains of the United States to begin a new life in what they thought would be a land of opportunity. They soon learn that surviving, let alone thriving, on the plains is more difficult than they could have ever imagined.

I would like you to write an essay in which you apply at least three ideas from *How to Read Literature Like a Professor* to elements of the novel *My Antonia*. Are there symbols, character types, or geographic elements that, once you notice them, give you a deeper insight into the story and its characters? I am not providing a length requirement for the essay, although the essay should be written in multiple paragraphs, typed and formatted according to MLA guidelines, and make specific references to both texts. Be prepared to turn in this essay to Canvas on the first day of class.

You may acquire each book in whatever way is most suitable for you (ebook, used, new, etc.), but you will need access to both books throughout the school year. Bring both to class on the first day of school.

If you have any questions about the summer reading assignment or the class in general, feel free to e-mail me at friedlinerick@lakelocal.org.

Have a great summer. See you in August.

Mr. Friedline