

## 2017-18 Summer Reading AP Literature

Welcome to Ms. Rabun's AP Lit group for the upcoming school year. Your summer reading is an important part of the course that will help you grow as a reader, thinker, and writer.

The Advanced Placement English Literature and Composition exam consists of approximately 55 multiple-choice questions to be answered in one hour and three essay questions (Poetry, Prose, and Open-Ended) to be written in two hours. The Poetry and Prose essays will ask you to respond in specific ways to a poem or prose selection while the Open-Ended essay question allows you to choose a novel or play of **significant literary merit** to respond to the prompt. Your summer assignments are the first steps to a success on the AP Lit test.

### SUMMER READING SELECTIONS

**\*\*You must have a paper copy of each– not an electronic version.**

- (1) *Death of a Salesman* by Arthur Miller. ISBN 0-140-48134-6.  
Any edition of the play is acceptable. This play is a modern masterpiece that examines the genre of tragedy through the life of the common man.
- (2) *Ethan Frome* by Edith Wharton. ISBN 0-486-26690-7. (Dover Thrift Edition -- \$3.00 on Amazon)  
A novella that depicts a doomed romance in the unforgiving New England winter. Perfect for summer, right?

### ANNOTATE AS YOU READ

**\*\*\*You should annotate the entire text of *Death of a Salesman* and *Ethan Frome* so that you capture your impressions and easily refer to passages that were memorable during class discussions.** This is more than highlighting passages, although that is also helpful. Annotating is responding to the text by recording your thoughts and political/social/historical/literary connections you see. You likely already have your own style of annotation, but if you don't you can review Mortimer Adler's *How To Read A Book*, the full text of which can be found with a quick Google search. Mark passages and quotations that reveal each work's themes, characters, and style (unique use of language). This knowledge will be of great help to you when you are completing one of the initial class assignments, especially the initial timed-writes. Look for patterns of images, subjects, and themes.

### WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS RELATED TO SUMMER READING SELECTIONS

- (1) For each work, choose one of the essay prompts on the other side of this document and **\*handwrite\*** a two-page essay (not 1 ½ pages), incorporating specific examples and quotes from the text. (Due first day of school – 45 points per essay).
- (2) Content-related assignments: During the first weeks of school, you will complete content-specific analysis tasks. These will be assigned during the first week of class.

ALL reading should be completed prior to the first day of school or the first day that you are present at school.

**\*If you know that you are taking a long trip near the end of July, then be sure that you complete the work earlier in the summer.**

Please bring your annotated copy of both texts to school with you on the first day of classes.

If you have questions about the summer assignment, the course, or the reading selections, please feel free to email me throughout the summer.

[rabun.kristin@mail.fcboe.org](mailto:rabun.kristin@mail.fcboe.org)

I look forward to learning with you next year. Happy Reading!

Choose one of the prompts below for your essay on *Death of A Salesman* and a different prompt from the list below for your essay on *Ethan Frome*.

#### Choice 1

It has often been said that what we value can be determined only by what we sacrifice. Consider how this statement applies to a character from a novel or play.

Select a character that has deliberately sacrificed, surrendered, or forfeited something in a way that highlights that character's values. Then write a well-organized essay in which you analyze how the particular sacrifice illuminates the character's values and provides a deeper understanding of the meaning of the work as a whole.

#### Choice 2

According to critic Northrop Fry, "Tragic heroes are so much the highest points in their human landscape that they seem the inevitable conductors of the power about them, great trees more likely to be struck by lightning than a clump of grass. Conductors may of course be instruments as well as victims of the divine lightning."

Select a novel or play in which a tragic figure functions as an instrument of the suffering of others. Then write an essay in which you explain how the suffering brought upon others by that figure contributes to the tragic vision of the work as a whole. Avoid mere plot summary.

#### Choice 3

The eighteenth-century British novelist Laurence Sterne wrote, "No body, but he who has felt it, can conceive what a plaguing thing it is to have a man's mind torn asunder by two projects of equal strength, both obstinately pulling in a contrary direction at the same time."

From a novel or play choose a character (not necessarily the protagonist) whose mind is pulled in conflicting directions by two compelling desires, ambitions, obligations, or influences. Then, in a well-organized essay, identify each of the two conflicting forces and explain how this conflict within one character illuminates the meaning of the work as a whole.