

AP English Literature and Composition Summer Assignment

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Hi, there.

Your summer assignment is a chance for you to read a variety of texts, explore ideas, and write in response to what you are reading and thinking. The assignment has three parts, and all of the work is due the first week of school. I have provided links to some of the items I want you check out. We will piggyback on the summer assignment during the first few weeks of school.

1. Organizing Yourself.

Text: *How I Take Notes* and *10 Note-Taking Tips*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=amVHBlhWwCo>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m5cQ5bWLi2A&t=104s>

Take a look at how this person organizes their notes. It's fantastic; isn't it? I want you to think about how you can benefit from this organization method. Create a method for note taking similar to Study Tee's that works for you. It may take you a few tries, but your notes are going to be so important when April rolls around. Maybe you can get into color coding... Maybe you like writing in pencil better than pen or vice versa... Maybe you use a particular pen color for poetry analysis and another for prose... Figure it out and enjoy the process while you're at it.

Assignment: Get a notebook of your choice with the style of paper you prefer (lined, graph, blank, bullet point, etc.). Your notebook should be a good size—not tiny. It can be a spiral notebook, a composition notebook, or even a sketchbook, which ever you decide to get, you should *love* your notebook. *It should make you happy and you should feel good about it.* We will use this notebook to create notes for all sorts of things: poetry, novels, plays, characterization, theme, etc. It will eventually contain foldouts and index cards, and washi tape, and anything else you may want to add to it. *The point is this notebook should feel like you.*

Why it's important: The process of learning something often starts out feeling disorganized and unwieldy; the most important aspects are not always remarkable. Consolidation helps organize and solidify learning. This notebook will serve as a means to consolidate what you have learned throughout the year, allowing you to retrieve the significant progress we make. Here you will find your progress as you begin to unwrap the literature and all it encompasses. *Make this notebook yours.* Decorate if you like or keep it clean and clear. The choice is yours.

2. Reading.

Text: Leo Babauta's *Why I Read*

<https://zenhabits.net/why-read/>

Assignment: Write a page of notes about your relationship with reading. Share an honest assessment of the role it plays in your life. Think about how you would conceptualize and categorize the impact reading has had on you. I value honesty over flattery. If reading is not your thing, say it. If you love it, then let me know. If it's complicated, I want to know too. I don't care so much which side you take; I want your frank reflection. I want to read about why you feel the way that you do. I want to get to know you as a reader.

Why it's important: This is the first step in me getting to know you as a reader. You get to think about yourself and reflect on the self. Reflection is important.

3. Get to know them—all of them.

Text: *Romeo and Juliet*

During the summer weeks, please **read and annotate** William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. I suggest you read the Shakespeare Folger Library version of the text which many of you already have and **stay away** from any "Shakespeare made easy" books and SparkNotes. The idea is for you to **wrestle with the language** and attempt to understand it and its development of the characters and theme. Interpret what you read using your existing knowledge and intuition. You've got literary "spidey senses"—Use them.

https://shakespeare.folger.edu/downloads/pdf/romeo-and-juliet_PDF_FolgerShakespeare.pdf

I have included a PDF of William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. I have to tell you though; I am not a fan of reading books online or on any electronic device. Why? Because you can't interact with the text. You can't annotate. You can't fold the pages and break the spine. It's not tangible. You should always, at least for this course, purchase a copy of any novel or play we read in class.

We will begin the class discussing major themes, characterization, and relationships in *Romeo and Juliet*. You need to know the characters well. Know the way they interact with one another. Know how they develop, if they develop at all. Bring your *Romeo and Juliet* books with you on the first day of school. There will be a "Prove to Me You Read" quiz the second week of school—August 21- 25—you won't know when. Know the characters well, well enough to be able to tell me about them as you would be able to discuss a character in your favorite show.

Assignment: Character One-Pager -- A one-pager is a way to visually share key ideas and information from what you have learned. When you create a one-pager, you are trying to use both visual symbols and important words to clearly and concisely share your most important takeaways with someone else. You will be graded on how well you support your position and on your representation of the characters. For this assignment, you will be creating a one-pager for one character in *Romeo and Juliet*. You can choose Romeo or Juliet as one of the characters you want to profile, but I highly recommend you explore other characters: the Nurse, Friar Laurence, Tybalt, Benvolio, Lord Capulet, Lady Capulet, Paris, Mercutio. So many to choose from. Challenge yourself to look at the characters that are so often overlooked because they are not Romeo and Juliet. This activity will be an introduction to characterization.

Guidelines:

1. Fill the entire page—very little white space should be showing.
2. Use markers/colored pencils/pens/crayons for illustrations/drawings
3. At least 4 or more quotations relating to the character that you feel are especially important. Be sure to include the act number, the scene number, and line numbers that match your book.
4. A personal response to each quotation you selected (an interpretation/explanation of its significance – ask yourself these questions:
 - Why did I choose this quote?
 - How is it significant to the plot?
 - How does it encompass some aspect of this character and/or their relationship with another character?
 - Does it connect to theme in any way? How?
 - What is theme?
 - Theme is a central, unifying idea. It's the bigger issue that emerges as the characters pursue their goals. What thematic topics does your character connect to and help develop throughout the play?
5. At least 3 graphics or symbols which relate to the character—these can be literal or interpretative. Provide an explanation of the graphic in connection to the character. You may incorporate quotes here to support your idea.

Below you will find skills that you need to be privy to in regard to characterization. You do not need to answer the questions, but you should be actively thinking about how each of the questions below applies to the character you have chosen to complete the one-pager about. You may use the questions as a guide to help you choose good quotes for your particular character and to help you complete the notes.

CHR-1.A: Identify and describe what specific textual details reveal about a character, that character's perspective. This skill has you analyze how the character is described, what the character says, and what the character does.

Questions to Consider:

1. How is the character described physically, emotionally, and/or psychologically?
2. What do you know about the character's background? How does this background influence the character?
3. What drives the character to think, feel, and/or act in the manner he or she does?
4. What do you associate this character with? These things can be physical, emotional, or symbolic.

CHR-1.B: Explain the function of a character changing or remaining unchanged.

A Character's growth or the lack of growth is often used by the author to illustrate the theme of the novel.

Questions to Consider:

1. During the chapters/acts/scenes you read, does the character change, or stay the same?
2. Does a character's changing constitute progress or decline?
3. How does the author want you to feel about this character?
4. Is the characterization positive or negative? How can you tell?
5. How does the author use this character to convey the themes of the novel?

CHR-1.C: Explain the function of contrasting characters.

In literature, a foil is a character that shows qualities that are in contrast with the qualities of another character. Lennie and George are foil characters because they are direct opposites physically and mentally. The objective of foils is for one character to highlight the traits of the other character. You should be considering why the author has created this foil character. How does this foil character connect to the work as a whole (theme)?

Questions to Consider:

1. How do comparable traits of two or more characters contrast?
2. What do the differing traits between characters reveal about them individually, their relationships with one another, and their relationships with other characters?
3. How does considering the significance of a contrast between characters contribute to meaning in the text?
4. Do their differences help them or hurt them?

CHR-1.D: Describe how textual details reveal nuances and complexities in characters' relationships with one another. For this skill, you will consider how the language (diction) that the character uses (dialogue) when interacting with other characters. You should also consider how the author has established this character's relationship with the other characters. How well does this character get along with others?

Questions to Consider:

1. Which particular images, character speech, and textual details are relevant for examining characters' relationships?
2. How is the character's speech similar or unique to the other characters?
3. How do images, character speech, and other textual details reveal how characters interact?
4. How do diction and the details that a narrator or speaker offers (or does not offer) convey a particular perspective, ambiguity, and/or inconsistency and convey nuances and complexities in character relationships?