

Honors American Literature and Composition
Air Academy High School 2019-2020

Dear student,

According to your schedule for the 2019-2020 school year, you have signed up for **Honors American Literature and Composition**. I would like to take this opportunity to welcome you to the class!

This course will take you through American history and allow you to see the ways in which literature is a response to the times. You will learn about several literary movements and will see how literature has changed and continues to change over time. This course will be rigorous, challenging, and will require substantial writing and reading, but you will succeed if you come prepared to put the necessary time and effort into the class. I encourage you to take responsibility for your own learning and make this course an academic priority.

There are two parts to your **summer reading assignment**. First, you will select ONE of the novels listed below. Because there is beauty and power in diverse voices, you will be reading a novel by an African American author. Please be aware that some of the texts have content or language that may make you uncomfortable. I recommend you read the synopsis of each novel before you make your choice. If you are uncomfortable as you read, consider why you are feeling the way you are and the purpose the author had in choosing the language or plotline he or she did. As you read, you should do a careful textual analysis, which requires marking up the text, so please acquire a personal copy of the novel. It is good practice to annotate for key literary elements, especially character, theme, and writing style. Also, it is beneficial to write short summaries in the margin at the end of a chapter; this helps you quickly identify key aspects of that chapter. While your annotations won't be turned in, they will help you complete your dialectical journal, which will be submitted on **Monday, August 26th**. Detailed instructions and a template for this assignment are below.

The second part of your **summer reading assignment** is to read chapter 2 of *They Say/I Say: The Moves That Matter in Academic Writing* by Gerald Graff and Cathy Birkenstein. The link to the online text is below. Chapter 2 is titled "Her Point Is: The Art of Summarizing." After reading this chapter, you will select three articles about current events that are connected in some way to your choice novel. You will need to understand themes and plot in order to search for relevant articles. In a Google Doc, you will put the full MLA citation for your article followed by a brief summary of main points. Your summary for each article should not exceed four well-written sentences. This assignment will be submitted **Monday, August 26th**.

Assignments that are submitted late will automatically lose 25%, which means the highest possible grade will be a 75%. Please do not wait until the last minute to begin these assignments. While they are time-consuming, they will prepare you to succeed and grow in your English skills. I recommend that you create a reading schedule to keep yourself on track. If there is a movie version of your novel, do not fall into the trap of assuming the movie will give you a good enough understanding of the text to allow you to succeed. Hollywood adaptations of movies are not always valid and will not be a reliable resource for you for these assignments. Please be aware that your effort on these assignments will be reflected in your grade. If you give these assignments the time and energy they deserve, your grade will reflect that; if you choose to take shortcuts, your grade will reflect that.

I am looking forward to working with you this upcoming school year and cannot wait to meet you!

Sincerely,

Mrs. Rachel Cullen
rachel.cullen@asd20.org

Note: ALL assignments will be submitted into Turnitin.com, an online plagiarism checker. Make sure your work is original! Any student who submits plagiarized work (This includes work that matches a peer's work.) will receive an automatic zero and no opportunity to earn those points back.

Link to *They Say/I Say* online PDF:

<https://www.iss.k12.nc.us/cms/lib/NC01000579/Centricity/Domain/2741/They%20Say%20I%20Say%20Full%20Text.pdf>

You are only required to read chapter 2, but please feel free to read the text in its entirety if you so choose.

Choice Novels - Choose ONE of the following:

Uncle Tom's Cabin (1852) by Harriet Beecher Stowe
The Blacker the Berry (1929) by Wallace Thurman
Not Without Laughter (1930) by Langston Hughes
Their Eyes Were Watching God (1937) by Zora Neale Hurston
Native Son (1940) by Richard Wright
Invisible Man (1952) by Ralph Ellison
Song of Solomon (1977) by Toni Morrison
The Color Purple (1982) by Alice Walker
Middle Passage (1990) by Charles Johnson
The Underground Railroad (2016) by Colson Whitehead

Dialectical Journals

The term "Dialectic" means "the art or practice of arriving at the truth by using conversation involving question and answer." Think of your dialectical journal as a series of conversations with the texts we read during this course. The process is meant to help you develop a better understanding of the texts we read.

Requirements:

- Use The TEMPLATE (Do not be alarmed that it is titled "AP Lit Journal."): <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1EKzNPXHBNffW0Qq6DHy7w9PARIBoUtc69FTEWZOqj-E/co>
[py](#)
- Quantity of entries: 10 (minimum)
- Include entries from beginning, middle, and end of the book
- Write a fully developed paragraph for each entry (10 sentences minimum)
- **Due Aug. 26, 2019 (journals not submitted by due date will incur a 25 percent deduction from the score received.)**

Procedure:

- As you read, choose passages that stand out to you and record them in the left-hand column of a T-chart (*ALWAYS include page numbers*).

- In the right column, write your response to the text (ideas/insights, questions, reflections, analysis, and comments on each passage)
- Label your responses. The following is a list of *sample* codes:
 - (CH)Characterization – Analyze details or dialog the author gives you to build his/her characters.
 - (C) Connect – Make a connection to your life, the world, or another text
 - (P) Predict – Anticipate what will occur based on what’s in the passage
 - (L) Literary Device – analyze the author’s craft using literary terminology
 - (R) Reflect – Think deeply about what the passage means in a broad sense – not just to the characters in the story. What conclusions can you draw about the world, about human nature, or just the way things work?
 - (T) Theme - Determine the author’s overall message about some aspect of life through a close reading of a passage.
 - (M)Mood – Determine the mood or tone of a scene and explain how that might be important.

Sample Dialectical Journal entry: *Blues Ain’t No Mockinbird* by Toni Cade Bambara

Passages from the text	Page #	Commentary
<p>“The puddle had frozen over, and me and Cathy went stompin in it. The twins from next door, Tyrone and Terry, were swingin so high out of sight we forgot we were waitin our turn on the tire. Cathy jumped up and came down hard on her heels and started tapdancin. And the frozen patch splinterin every which way underneath kinda spooky. ‘Looks like a plastic spider web,’ she said. ‘A sort of weird spider, I guess, with many mental problems.’”</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>(CH) In this first paragraph of the story Bambara indirectly characterizes the narrator using rural Southern dialect to let us know our setting is the South and our narrator may be smart, but may not be “educated.” We also learn that the characters are children from the activities described. (L) Nice thermal imagery about the puddle freezing over to let us know how cold it is in the scene. (C) The visual imagery of the twins swinging high on the tire swing reminds me of my own childhood when I had to wait in line forever to use the swing. And how exciting it was once it was my turn. (L) There is more great visual imagery about the splintering puddle, and the kinetic imagery of the “tapdancin.” I especially liked the simile about the spider web and the humor of spider with mental problems. (M) The mood of the story seems to be playful and humorous. (P) I wonder if the entire story will be this way, too? Overall, I am drawn into the story and am already laughing.</p>

Choosing Passages from the Text:

Look for quotes that seem significant, powerful, thought provoking or puzzling. For example, you might record:

- Effective &/or creative use of stylistic or literary devices
- Passages that remind you of your own life or something you've seen before
- Structural shifts or turns in the plot
- A passage that makes you realize something you hadn't seen before
- Examples of patterns: recurring images, ideas, colors, symbols or motifs.
- Passages with confusing language or unfamiliar vocabulary
- Events you find surprising or confusing
- Passages that illustrate a particular character or setting
- If you find an extremely long passage that moves you, don't hesitate to use it, just employ ellipses (...) to shorten your writing load. You'll have the page number so that if you decide to share your entry, the class can easily find and read along.

Responding To the Text:

You can *respond* to the text in a variety of ways. The most important thing to remember is that your observations should be *specific and detailed*. You can write as much as you want for each entry.

The Target: Higher Level Responses

- Analyze the text for use of literary devices (tone, structure, style, imagery) and how they contribute to the Theme
- Make connections between different characters or events in the text
- Make connections to a different text (or film, song, etc.)
- Discuss the words, ideas, or actions of the author or character(s)
- Consider an event or description from the perspective of a different character
- Analyze a passage and its relationship to the story as a whole

Current Events Articles

You will do this for three articles in a Google Doc.

Your goal is to find three articles about current events that connect to your choice novel in some way.

1) Full MLA citation of article

Try to do this without using a citation generator. Use Purdue OWL as a reference:

https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/mla_style/mla_formatting_and_style_guide/mla_formatting_and_style_guide.html

2) Summary of article

This should be no more than four well-written sentences. Make sure the author's argument, main points, and purpose are in your summary. Use *They Say/I Say* as a reference.