Dear Advanced Placement Literature Student,

Welcome to a challenging, engaging study of the various genres of literature. As this course is the equivalent of a first-year college course, extensive reading and writing are expected. We will read various novels, plays, prose, and poetry which will give you an opportunity to refine your close reading skills, paying special attention to writers’ use of rhetorical strategies and literary elements. This course teaches students to write an interpretation of a piece of literature that is based on a careful observation of textual details, considering the work's structure, style, and themes; the social and historical values it reflects and embodies; and such elements as the use of figurative language, imagery, symbolism, and tone.

A primary goal of this course is to provide rigorous instruction and practice in writing in a variety of modes: to understand—informal, exploratory writing where students will discuss what they think about the texts they have read; to explain—expository, analytical essays in which students draw upon textual details to develop an extended explanation and interpretation of the meanings of a literary text; to evaluate—analytical, argumentative essays in which students draw upon textual details to make and explain judgments about a work's artistry and quality, and its social and cultural values. Students will write informal reaction papers, formal extended analyses, timed in-class responses, and a documented research paper. Furthermore, students will demonstrate knowledge of grammatical conventions through writing, editing, and speaking.

Typically, college courses require three hours of outside preparation for every hour of class time; you can expect A.P. English to be only slightly less demanding. By enrolling in A.P. English, you have indicated that you are interested in the study of literature and writing and that you are willing to embrace a challenge. This course will be demanding, satisfying, and worthwhile.

An important goal of this course is to prepare you to excel on the AP English Literature and Composition exam, given in May. The course will teach you the expectations of the AP examiners and will provide many opportunities for practicing writing and reading in the exam format.

A summer reading list is given below in order to help you transition into the first marking period where you will read and analyze texts in depth. On the back of this letter, specific requirements which you should complete thoroughly and consistently are explained. You will be required to submit annotated texts and requirements on the first day of school—Tuesday, September 6—which comprise a significant portion of the Term 1 grade. Moreover, you will complete a test for each text during the first week.


Best regards,

Sarah C. Barrow and Stuart Nabors
AP English Literature and Composition Teachers

We will check email until June 15th and after August 1st.
If you have any questions, please email either of us.
sarah_barrow@ccpsnet.net; stuart_nabors@ccpsnet.net
AP English Literature and Composition Summer Reading Assignments

A mere suggestion: do not, do not, DO NOT wait until the weekend before it is due to begin this work.

Reading Requirements [read in this order]


Thomas Foster knows “how to read literature like a professor” because he is a professor of English at the University of Michigan. In a very informal style (this is not a textbook), Foster focuses on literary basics: major themes and motifs, literary models, and narrative devices … all of which will be oh! so helpful as we study various texts throughout the school year ahead. Some of what you read will be familiar to you, and some of it will be new and provide “food for thought” as you read your summer novel. As you read, you should annotate (see abbreviated notes from the article “How to Mark a Book”), and might consider taking notes as well. ~Mrs. Sherry Scoggins


Pi Patel, a young man from India, tells how he was shipwrecked and stranded in a lifeboat with a Bengal tiger for 227 days. This outlandish story is only the core of a deceptively complex three-part novel about, ultimately, memory as a narrative and about how we choose truths. Unlike other authors who use shifting chronologies and unreliable narrators, Martel frequently achieves something deeper than technical gimmickry. Pi, regardless of what actually happened to him, earns our trust as a narrator and a character, and makes good, in his way, on the promise in the last sentence of part one—that is, just before the tiger saga—"This story has a happy ending." If Martel's strange, touching novel seems a fable without quite a moral, or a parable without quite a metaphor, it still succeeds on its own terms. ~Will Hickman Copyright © American Library Association

Annotations [hand-written in the margins and throughout the text]

1. Annotation is the attentive reading and marking of a text, and active readers annotate for different purposes. As you read *How to Read Literature Like a Professor*, annotate this text as ‘notes’ (see below) to learn and to apply in order to further your literary annotative analysis of *Life of Pi*.

How to Mark a Book/Annotate: Learn what the book teaches. (This is the text-to-world connection.)

Underline, circle, or highlight key words and phrases.
Cross-reference a term with the book’s explanation of the term, or where the book gives the term fuller treatment.
- In other words, put a reference to another page in the book in the margin where you’re reading. Use a page number.
- Then, return the favor at the place in the book you just referred to. You now have a link so you can find both pages if you find one of them.

Put your own summaries in the margin.
- If you summarize a passage in your own words, you’ll learn the material much better.
- If you put your summaries in your books instead of separate notebooks, the book you read and the summary you wrote will reinforce each other. A positive synergy happens! You’ll also keep your book and your notes in one place.

Leave a “trail” in the book that makes it easier to follow when you study the material again.
- Make a trail by writing subject matter headings in the margins. You’ll find the material more easily the second time through.
- Bracket or highlight sections you think are important.

Create a glossary at the beginning or end of a chapter or a book.
- Every time you read a word you don’t know that seems important for your purposes in reading the book, write it down in your glossary.
- In your glossary next to the word in question, put the page number where the word may be found.
- Put a very short definition by each word in the glossary.
2. As you read *Life of Pi*, complete a thorough literary annotative analysis. For this text, analyze how the author’s employment of specific rhetorical strategies and literary devices further characterization, plot development, symbols, motifs, multiple themes, and thus, the text as a whole. Analyze various devices; avoid redundancy. Furthermore, you must write how and why the devices produce particular effects within the text. In other words, theorize (based on your analysis) how the techniques contribute to the purpose of the piece and improve its quality. To that aim, evaluate (through your annotations) the text on the following criteria:

- **Scenes**: significance of the opening and closing scenes
- **Characters**: name, role in the story, significance, descriptive details
- **Memorable Quotes**: quote and its significance
- **Author’s Style**: highlight/mark examples that demonstrate the style
- **Possible Themes**: topics of discussion
- **Motifs and Symbols**: purposeful employment
- **Story’s Apparent Meaning**: shifts to a deeper, more complex meaning
- **Important Details**: worthy of another look
- **Rhetorical Devices**: how are they used, and how do they contribute to the meaning?
- **Life Lessons**: In what ways does the story teach about life or connect to another work of art or even another academic discipline?
- **Perspective**: Offer your interpretation of the text—and evidence for your interpretation.

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**How to Mark a Book/Annotate**

This outline addresses why you would ever want to mark in a book. For each reason, the outline gives specific strategies to achieve your goals in reading a book.

Interact with the book – talk back to it. You learn more from a conversation than you do from a lecture. (This is the text-to-self connection.)

- **Comments** – agreements or disagreements
- **Your personal experience**
  - Write a short reference to an experience that the text makes you remember
  - Write an idea or thought that the text helps you understand better
- **Random associations** (Foster: intertextuality)
  - Begin to trust your gut when reading! Does the passage remind you of a song? Another book? A story you read? Like some of your dreams, your associations may carry more psychic weight than you may realize at first. Write the association down in the margin!
  - Cross-reference the book to other books making the same point. Use a shortened name for the other book – one you’ll remember, though. (e.g., “Harry Potter 3”) (This is a text-to-text connection.)

Why? Because you aren’t born with a writing style. You pick it up. Perhaps there’s something that you like about this author’s style but you don’t know what it is. Learn to analyze an author’s writing style in order to pick up parts of her style that become natural to you.

**How?**

- Read a paragraph or two or three. Read it over and over. What begins to stand out to you?
- Pose questions of your own in the margins.
- Write key words or phrases at the top of the pages or at the end of the chapter noting significant topics, concepts, events.
- Reflect a bit. What do you like about the writer’s style? If nothing occurs to you, consider the tone of the piece (humorous, passionate, etc.) Begin to wonder: how did the writer get the tone across?
- Circle or underline parts of speech with different colored highlighters, pens, pencils. Perhaps red for verbs, blue for nouns, and green for pronouns.
- Circle or underline rhetorical devices with different colored writing instruments, or surround them with different geometric shapes: an oval, a rectangle, and a triangle.
- Examine sentence lengths and origination.
- Look for patterns.
- Sound devices – alliteration, assonance, onomatopoeia, repetition, internal rhymes, etc.

*Adapted from http://slowreads.com/ReadingArtsHowToMarkABook.htm*
Writing Requirements

Preliminary Research for Life of Pi

1. Analyze the title before reading: annotate each word for multiple meanings (denotative, the literal definition; and connotative, the abstract implication). Based on your analysis of the title, ask and answer: what could a reader assume is the subject matter; what types of characters/people might exist in this text; on what conflicts might the writer focus; and what is the purpose or aim of the writer in this text? [written on the verso/front side of the title page]

2. Research and take notes on the author and the time period in which the story is set; make preliminary connections between this information and your analysis of the title. [written on the recto/back side of the title page]

Advanced Placement Terms

Be familiar with the following terms that have appeared in AP rubrics and on AP examinations. AP essay questions contain two elements: a "what" element that questions content, and a "how" element that focuses on the way literary devices help reveal content.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
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<th>Term</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>allusion</td>
<td>dramatic monologue</td>
<td>personification</td>
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<tr>
<td>ambiguity</td>
<td>euphemism</td>
<td>point of view</td>
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<tr>
<td>apostrophe</td>
<td>figurative language</td>
<td>repetition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>antithesis</td>
<td>form</td>
<td>rhetorical devices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>argument (two sides)</td>
<td>imagery</td>
<td>rhetorical question</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>complex attitude</td>
<td>interior</td>
<td>rhyme</td>
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<tr>
<td>complexity</td>
<td>irony</td>
<td>satire</td>
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<tr>
<td>connection btw plot and meaning</td>
<td>language devices</td>
<td>simile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>connection between theme and style</td>
<td>metaphor</td>
<td>style</td>
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<tr>
<td>consistent control of elements</td>
<td>monologue</td>
<td>stylistic maturity</td>
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<tr>
<td>contrast changes in attitude</td>
<td>narrative elements</td>
<td>syntax</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>defend, challenge, or qualify</td>
<td>narrative pace</td>
<td>thematic contrasts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>denotation and connotation</td>
<td>observation, experience, reading</td>
<td>time shifts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>detail</td>
<td>onomatopoeia</td>
<td>tone (writer’s attitude)</td>
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<tr>
<td>dialogue</td>
<td>organization</td>
<td>understatement</td>
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<tr>
<td>diction</td>
<td>paradox</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>direct statement</td>
<td>persona</td>
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