

AP Language and Composition
2018 Summer Reading Assignments

Welcome to AP Language and Composition. I look forward to meeting and working with you this coming school year. In order to be successful in this class, you will need to accomplish the following work during the summer. This includes reading the two assigned novels and completing the required work which will be turned in on the first day of school. You will then be given an examination on each of the two novels during the first week of school. Failure to turn in the expected work and low test scores on the novels may result to placement in English 3.

Reading Guideline and Assignment Directions

To make the most of your reading experience, please be aware of the following:

First novel- *The Scarlet Letter* by Nathaniel Hawthorne

- You may skip the introductory section entitled “The Custom House.” Please begin reading Chapter One, “The Prison Door.”
- You should take **handwritten** notes on **every** chapter and **highlight** key sections.
- I expect you to examine closely what Hawthorne is saying. This means that you are not just reading for basic meaning, but are looking into **diction (word choice), imagery, symbolism, characterization, themes, and Biblical allusions**. As you encounter these devices, note and explain their importance in the novel.
- Pay close attention to these characters: **Hester Prynne, Roger Chillingsworth, Reverend Arthur Dimmesdale, and Pearl**.
- Know specific details about each of the above characters and include them in your notes.
- Choose a quote for each of the above characters that best sums up his/her importance in the novel.
- Summarize the novel’s plot.
- Explain the meaning of the title and explain the meaning of the letter **A**.
- Explain any biblical values or truths that you found expressed in this novel.
- Explain the implication of justice, revenge, forgiveness, and the human heart as demonstrated in *The Scarlet Letter*. Which of these motifs do you think is the most important in understanding Hawthorne’s purpose for writing this novel? Explain in detail.

Second novel- *Their Eyes Were Watching God* by Zora Neale Hurston

- Once again, take **handwritten notes** on **every** chapter and **highlight** key sections. Include the following in your notes:
- What kind of God are the eyes of Hurston's characters watching?
- Do any of the characters question God?
- Explain the importance of springtime imagery found in the novel. What does this imagery symbolize? How is it important to Janie?
- Pay close attention to Hurston's use of vernacular dialect and how important it is to our understanding of Janie and the other characters' way of life. What do these speech patterns reveal about the quality of these lives and the nature of these communities? Find quotes from three different characters to support your response.
- Know specific details about Janie and each of her husbands.
- What is the importance of the concept of **horizon**? How do Janie and each of her men widen her horizon? What is the significance of the novel's final sentences in regards to this?
- How does Janie acquire her own voice and the ability to shape her own life? How do you think the two are related?
- Explain the men's attitudes toward women. How does Janie react to these attitudes? How would you explain Hurston's depiction of violence toward women?
- What is the importance of the "signifyin" and playin'de dozens" on the front porch of Joe's store and elsewhere?
- Hurston focuses on the differences between the language of Janie and the other women and that of the men. How do these differences in language reflect the two groups' approaches to relationships, power, self-realization, and life? Show how the novel's first two paragraphs point to these differences.

In addition to the above notes, I would like you to answer the essay prompt below. This essay should be typed using MLA format and must be at least two pages long. Provide specific information from the text to support your stance. Quote and cite the pages.

Throughout the novel, Janie is struggling to find her dream of happiness. Discuss the path she takes in her attempts to find happiness. What roadblocks must she overcome? Ultimately, does she find the happiness that she seeks? How do you know?