

Incoming AP Literature and Composition

It is the belief of the Weston school system that summer reading provides many benefits for our students, including the development of effective reading habits and reflective thinking. All Weston students will be asked to read over the summer. In grades 6 through 12, there will be one required title, with a strong suggestion of at least two additional titles, preferably selected from a Supplementary Reading List, which will support the exploration of this grade's theme for the year. Some advanced courses may have additional or alternate requirements.

GRADE 12: AP LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION SUMMER READING

Grade Level Theme: The Making of Meaning

Unit 1 Concept: Understanding Identity

Essential Questions:

- 1. How do structural patterns in literature communicate meaning?*
- 2. How are our lives shaped/limited by heredity and experience?*

The folks at the College Board who create the AP Lit Exam describe the course as follows:

The AP English Literature and Composition course is designed to engage students in the careful reading and critical analysis of imaginative literature. Through the close reading of selected texts, students can deepen their understanding of the ways writers use language to provide both meaning and pleasure for their readers. *As they read, students should consider a work's structure, style, and themes, as well as such smaller-scale elements as the use of figurative language, imagery, symbolism, and tone.* (Italics mine.)

COMPLETION OF THIS SUMMER ASSIGNMENT IS CRITICAL TO YOUR SUCCESS IN THIS COURSE. IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT YOU UNDERSTAND THE REQUIREMENTS OF THIS SUMMER WORK.

**IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, PLEASE CONTACT
MS. HAND OR MS. CINCOTTA IN PERSON OR VIA E-MAIL**

- All of the work outlined below is due on the first day of class.
- Be prepared for reading tests on both *An American Childhood* and *How to Read Literature Like a Professor* on the first day of class.
- Hand in annotated Dillard text on the first day of class, or significant late penalties will apply.
- Hand in paper on the first day of class, or significant late penalties will apply.

REQUIRED TEXTS

*An American Childhood** by Annie Dillard

How to Read Literature Like a Professor: A Lively and Entertaining Guide to Reading Between the Lines by Thomas Foster

ASSIGNMENT

***An American Childhood** by Annie Dillard**

1. Using the attached model as a guide, **read** and **annotate** in the margins. You will comment on what the author says and also focus on how she chooses to say it, the way she “use(s) language to provide both meaning and pleasure.” Therefore, in addition to identifying Dillard’s ideas (**themes**), analyze her word choice (**diction**), sentence structure (**syntax**), use of symbol, metaphor and simile (**figurative language**), **tone** and **style**. Think also about how she chooses to arrange her experiences (**sequencing structure**). Do not simply write “metaphor,” “tone,” “diction,” etc. Make sure to describe the specific effect achieved. Be legible!

2. Review your general annotations as described above and then choose 5-6 consecutive pages of text for **intensive** annotation. You **may not choose** “The Chase” pages 45-49, since we will be using that chapter as a model for class discussion. You may wish to photocopy your selected pages, reducing the text size, so that you have more marginal room for your notes. On the **first day of class** I will collect your texts so that I can evaluate both the “general” and the “intensive” annotations.

A Note about *An American Childhood

One of the benefits of beginning with Dillard’s autobiography is that it will give you a strong foundation from which to build the personal essays for your college applications. A common essay “prompt” is to *discuss a significant experience*. Dillard’s work is a series of significant experiences that shaped her character and help us to understand the kind of person she is. As you read, think back on the tribulations and joys of your own past and how they help define the person you are today.

***How to Read Literature Like a Professor: A Lively and Entertaining Guide to Reading Between the Lines* Thomas Foster**

1. **Read** the following chapters:

How’d He Do That?	xi-xviii
Now, Where Have I Seen Her Before?	28-36
...Or the Bible	47-56
It’s Greek to Me	64-73
It’s More Than Just Rain or Snow	74-81
Does He Mean That?	82-86
Is That a Symbol?	97-107
Flights of Fancy	125-134
Marked for Greatness	193-200
He’s Blind for a Reason, You Know	201-206
It’s Never Just Heart Disease	207-212
...And Rarely Just Illness	213-225
Is He Serious? And Other Ironies	235-244

2. **Take notes as you read**, focusing on the general concepts outlined and the specific texts referenced in the extended illustrations.

3. After you complete the chapter, “Is He Serious? And Other Ironies,” you will examine The Adventures of Huck Finn, concentrating on Foster’s point that “Irony works because the reader/audience understands something that eludes one or more of the main characters.” Using Huck as your “character,” generate a series of brief paragraphs (each beginning with a Strong Controlling Topic Sentence) in which you discuss passages from the novel where Huck’s insights and moral and character judgments are clearly different from those of the reader, passages where you think to yourself, “That boy doesn’t get it!” You should focus on topics including racism, Tom Sawyer, Huck’s sense of himself and moral hypocrisy. Do not summarize plot. Rather use brief quotations/references to plot to support your claims. Aim for an overall length of 2-3 pages, 12 point font, Times New Roman, double-spaced. Hard copy will be handed to me on the first day of class, and submitted into Turnitin at a later date.

**REMEMBER:
IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, CONTACT
MS HAND OR MS CINCOTTA.**

SUPPLEMENTARY READING LIST: MEMOIR/AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Edward Abbey, *Desert Solitaire*
Henry Adams, *The Education of Henry Adams*
Mitch Albom, *Tuesdays with Morrie*
Dorothy Allison, *Two or Three Things I Know For Sure*
Maya Angelou, *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*, etc.
Jimmy Santiago Baca, *A Place to Stand*
James Baldwin, *Notes of a Native Son*
Russell Baker, *Growing Up*
Ishmael Beah, *A Long Way Gone: Memoirs of a Boy Soldier*
Rick Bragg, *It's All Over But the Shoutin'*
Sandra Cisneros, *House on Mango Street*
Jill Ker Conway, *The Road from Coorain*
Malcolm Cowley, *Exile's Return*
Richard Henry Dana, *Two Years Before the Mast*
Antoine de Saint-Exupery, *Wind, Sand, and Stars*
Henry Louis Gates Jr., *Colored People*
Graham Greene, *A Sort of Life*
Moss Hart, *Act One*
Lillian Hellman, *Pentimento*
Ernest Hemingway, *A Moveable Feast*
Alfred Kazin, *A Walker in the City*
Helen Keller, *The Story of My Life*
Haven Kimmel, *A Girl Named Zippy*
Maxine Hong Kingston, *Woman Warrior*
Jamaica Kincaid, *Annie John*
Larkin, Emma, *Finding George Orwell in Burma*
C.S. Lewis, *Surprised by Joy*
Norman MacLean, *A River Runs Through It*

Wangari Maathai, *Unbowed*
Mark Mathabane, *Kaffir Boy*
James McBride, *The Color of Water*
Mary McCarthy, *Memoirs of a Catholic Girlhood*
Wright Morris, *Will's Boy*
Pablo Neruda, *Memoirs*
Kathleen Norris, *Dakota*
Barack Obama, *Dreams from My Father*
Naomi Shihab Nye, *Never in a Hurry*
Richard Rodriguez, *Hunger for Memory*
Mike Rose, *Lives on the Boundary*
Esmeralda Santiago, *When I Was Puerto Rican*
Barbara Scot, *The Violet Shyness of Their Eyes, Prairie Reunion*
Richard Selzer, *Mortal Lessons: Notes on the Art of Surgery*
Kate Simon, *Bronx Primitive*
Wole Soyinka, *Ake*
Wallace Stegner, *Wolf Willow*
Lewis Thomas, *Lives of a Cell*, etc.
James Thurber, *My Life and Hard Times*
Mark Twain, *Roughing It, Life on the Mississippi*
Gore Vidal, *Palimpsest*
Eudora Welty, *One Writer's Beginnings*
Bailey White, *Mama Makes Up Her Mind*
John Edgar Wideman, *Brothers and Keepers*