

AP Literature and Composition

Summer Reading Assignment 2021

Dear AP Student,

Congratulations on enrolling in AP Literature and Composition! These two summer reading assignments are important and will help you to develop and observe your independent, authentic, close-reading and writing skills. Reading and writing over the summer, when you can plan and observe your own schedule and habits, will help you cultivate long-term life skills. Independent reading and writing help you develop critical thinking skills, independence and self-reliance, and self-confidence.

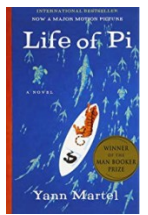
This summer, you'll complete two assignments, **both due the first week of school**. You'll read two texts: *Life of Pi*, a novel, and a play of your choice from the list below. The test (for *Life of Pi*) and writing assignment (about your play) help you develop a specific set of AP skills.

All the directions are below. Happy reading and writing! See you in August!

Assignment One

Read one novel for an AP-style, timed, in-class test.

Life of Pi by Yann Martel. *When Pi is sixteen, his family emigrates from India to North America aboard a Japanese cargo ship, along with their zoo animals bound for new homes. Pi finds himself alone in a lifeboat with his only companions: a hyena, an orangutan, a wounded zebra, a 450-pound Bengal tiger, and God.*



Directions: Read this novel completely. Purchase this paper edition: Mariner edition. 2003. ISBN: 9780156027328 You'll have a timed, multiple-choice and short-answer reading test during the first week of school. Bring your book to class on the first day of school.

Assignment Two

Read one play and write an Open-Response Essay.

Choose one play from the list below. You can read any version (paper or online). All of these plays are really good, classic plays about universal themes such as Family Dynamics; The American Dream; Personal Responsibility; Coming of Age; Spiritual Growth; Discovery; Freedom; Hope; Self-Understanding, and more.

- A Raisin in the Sun. Lorraine Hansberry. *A play about an African-American family aspiring to move beyond segregation and disenfranchisement in 1950s Chicago. Despite its specific era, the work speaks universally to the desire to improve one's circumstances while disagreeing on the best way of achieving them. The title comes from the poem "Harlem" (also known as "A Dream Deferred") by Langston Hughes.*
- A Streetcar Named Desire. Tennessee Williams. *This drama follows troubled former schoolteacher Blanche DuBois as she leaves small-town Mississippi and moves in with her sister, Stella. Blanche's flirtatious Southern-belle presence causes problems for Stella and her husband Stanley.*
- Fences. August Wilson. *This play explores themes of men and masculinity, sports and dreams, family relationships, The American Dream, Hopes, Betrayal, Freedom, and Plans that don't always work out in the end.*
- A Midsummer Night's Dream. William Shakespeare. *Lysander loves Hermia, and Hermia loves Lysander. Hermia's father wants her to marry Demetrius. Hermia is given four days to choose between Demetrius, life in a nunnery, or a death sentence.*

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- Death of a Salesman. Arthur Miller. *Written in 1949, this Pulitzer Prize-winning play is a cornerstone of American literature. It explores the nature of The American Dream and what happens when our plans do not work out. It explores family, growing up, father-son relationships, betrayal, broken hearts, and materialism.*

Directions for Writing your Open-Response Paper:

It's always a great idea to take notes about your reading before you write a paper. As you read, notice Theme, Character, Plot, and Conflict. Take notes on paper or on a document; keep track of pages and quotations and scenes as you read (it makes the paper-writing easier later!) Notes are for you. Recommended.

Note-Taking Tips: Use these questions to help you take notes/ analyze your play as you read:

- What are the author's messages to the audience?
- How do these characters relate to you/people you know/society today?
- What happens to the characters and how do they create the drama?
- Which characters are major /minor: who grows and learns?
- What do the main characters experience mentally, emotionally, psychologically, physically, spiritually? What makes them grow? What do they learn?

Ready to write?

Open a Google / Word Document and type answers to the following questions below.

- Use an MLA heading in the left top corner of your page (your name, teacher name, class name, date).
- You may write in the first-person ("I, ME, MY, WE") since this is an open-response paper. 250-500 words double spaced.
- You'll use turnitin.com to submit your writing assignment on the first day of school.
- Don't forget to LABEL / TITLE your essay in your Drive "AP Essay. Summer 2020."

Center an INTERESTING, CREATIVE TITLE on the actual paper.

Answer these questions as completely as possible within your 250-500 word paper.

Use the questions below to inspire you. This is an open response paper, so you can feel free to explore your thinking and ideas in a creative way that makes writing feel fun and interesting to you. If writing doesn't feel fun and interesting, you might need to do more notes, thinking, reading.

- What is your favorite scene from the play? Describe it.
- Why do you like this scene?
- Why is this scene important to the play as a whole?
- Why is this play interesting or important as a commentary on human nature?
- What do you learn about human beings? Relationships? Society? Culture? History? Philosophy? Art? You can have an open-response here.
- Basically explain what the play as a WHOLE shows readers about life and human nature. In other words, why is this PLAY important?
- Would you recommend it? Explain.
- What's it matter?
- Why are these pages important?