

AP English: 2011 Summer Reading Assignment

All essays must be turned in to Mr. Farrish on the first day of class

PHS English Department Summer Reading Philosophy: In conjunction with Plainfield High School's stated mission to help students develop into lifelong learners, the PHS English Department requires students to complete an independent reading project over the course of each summer. Summer reading assignments are designed to be rigorous, yet flexible enough to accommodate each student's individual needs and interests. Each summer reading assignment includes a writing piece which will engage students' critical thinking skills. All summer reading work correlates directly with course curricula, introducing students to important themes and concepts that will be further explored in their upcoming English classes.

Students must read any two of the following novels:

- Frankenstein by Mary Shelley
- All The Pretty Horses by Cormac McCarthy
- Cold Mountain by Charles Frazier
- The Kite Runner By Khaled Hosseini

All students must also read Ch. 1 of How To Read Literature Like a Professor by Thomas Foster

Essay Prompt: In AP English, students will study many common themes that appear in works throughout the history of literature. The novels you will read this summer are vastly different, but all explore the common theme of "the quest". Read Ch. 1 of How To Read Literature Like a Professor and examine how Foster defines the elements of "the quest". Then, choose and two of the novels listed above. Write a 4-5 page essay analyzing the theme of the quest in each text. Compare and contrast the protagonists of each text, their quest, and what each character learns from the quest. Your essay must be written in MLA format and feature at least one direct quotation from each text, including How To Read Literature

Like a Professor. Support your opinions with as much textual evidence as possible. When crafting your essay, you may want to consider each of the following points:

- How does each element of Foster's definition of "the quest" apply to each of the novels you read?
- How does each protagonist's relationship with society evolve over the course of the novel? How does each protagonist's relationship with society change by the end of his/her quest?
- What internal conflicts are the protagonists facing? Have these conflicts been resolved by the end of the quest? Why or why not?
- Compare and contrast each novel's protagonist. How are they similar? How are they different?
- Compare and contrast the quest that each of your protagonists embarks on. What is similar about the character's journeys? What is different?

If you have any questions regarding this assignment, please contact Mr. Farrish by e-mail at the either of following addresses:

FarrishJ@plainfieldschools.org or Mrfarrish99@hotmail.com