

Humanities English 4 AP
Summer Assignment
Ms. Lacoste E-16 alacoste@njuhsd.com

Happy Summer! I realize that “vacation homework” can be a pretty brutal oxymoron, but, as senior AP students, you’re probably used to it by now -- so “once more into the breach, dear friends, once more” (two points if you get the reference!). Your summer assignment is in three parts.

Part I – Research

In order to understand the works of literature we will be reading this year, it is necessary to have a basic comprehension of the historical, religious, and cultural ideas that influence and shape them. You will be researching **ALL** of the topics listed below and creating a MLA formatted **Works Consulted Page** listing all of your research sources. After your research, you will choose **TWO** subtopics (one biblical and one mythological) on which to write an academic summary of your findings (two summaries total). Summaries should contain proper in-text and parenthetical citations. Just to be clear, I am not looking for ten page, fully detailed summaries. Read your source material (the Bible, articles, mythology book, etc.) and then briefly summarize each required story.

Topic 1: *The Bible* as literature – I realize this is a vast topic. You don’t need to list every detail of every story. Understand the basic premise of each and the characters/people involved. If you don’t know basic biblical knowledge you will miss many literary references including the allusion to Cain and Abel in *Beowulf* and the significance of the name Absalom in *Cry the Beloved Country*. Research ALL subtopics and choose ONE on which to write an academic summary.

The story of Creation

Adam and Eve’s exile from paradise

The story of Cain and Abel

The story of Abraham and Isaac

The story of Moses – the burning bush, the Ten Commandments, the
plagues of Egypt, and the parting of the Red Sea

The story of David – Goliath, Bathsheba, and Absalom

The basic story of Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection

The story of Martha, Mary, and Lazarus

The story of Mary Magdalene

Topic 2: Greek mythology. This is another important bank of knowledge necessary to understand Western Literature. Again this topic is vast so hone your research. Research ALL subtopics and choose ONE on which to write an academic summary.

The Trojan War – Helen, Aeneas, Paris, Hector, Odysseus, Agamemnon,

Achilles, Menelaus,

The Story of Medea and Jason (suggestion -- the play *Medea* is wonderful).

The Story of Oedipus – (suggestion -- the play *Oedipus Rex* is often referenced on
the AP exam)

Basic Greek Gods – Zeus, Athena, Poseidon, Hades, Apollo, Hermes

Part II – Literature

Choose ONE of the following books (not one you have read before) to read:

Cry the Beloved Country by Alan Paton

A Thousand Splendid Suns by Khaled Hosseini

The Professor and the Madman: A Tale of Murder, Insanity, and the Making of

the Oxford English Dictionary by Simon Winchester

To the Lighthouse by Virginia Woolf

I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings by Maya Angelou

Jane Eyre by Charlotte Bronte

Crime and Punishment Fyodor Dostoevsky

After reading, choose **ONE** of the following AP essay topics to write on using your selected book. Your essay should be MLA formatted.

Topic 1: Oftentimes in literature a character gradually becomes estranged from society due to some aspect of his/her nature or convictions, an estrangement that may have damaging consequences either for the individual or for the society itself. Choose a novel which features a character who has become estranged from the society in which he/she exists. Then, in a careful, well-organized essay, indicate the impetus behind the estrangement and the damaging effects this alienation has upon the individual or the society around him/her.

Topic 2: Many works of literature deal with political or social issues. Write an essay in which you analyze how an author uses literary elements to explore a social or political issue and explain how the issue contributes to the meaning of the work as a whole.

Topic 3: A symbol is an object, action, or event that represents something or that creates a range of associations beyond itself. In literary works, a symbol can express an idea, clarify a meaning, or enlarge literal meaning. Choose a major symbol from a novel and write an essay analyzing how that symbol functions, what it reveals about the characters, or the themes of the work as a whole.

Part III – Vocabulary

Learn the attached list of literary terms/literary vocabulary. I'll be using these in class frequently and can guarantee they will show up on every test. Hopefully, you are familiar with many of the terms. For the ones you are unfamiliar with, make flashcards with pictures (visual images) and examples.

On the first day of class make sure you have the following to turn in:

- Two typed, MLA formatted academic summaries (one biblical, one mythological)
- A complete, varied, and MLA formatted Works Consulted Page listing all of your research sources
- A well- written and organized essay using the book you read to answer one of the AP prompts

If you have any questions about anything, feel free to email me at alacoste@njuhsd.com. Happy reading and researching!

Academic Summary Rubric

Format:

- Typed -- double spaced
- Proper MLA heading and title
- Correct in-text/parenthetical citations
- Works Consulted/ Works Cited Page

Quality/Conventions:

- Accurate summary of article/story – main points and characters are highlighted
- Formal tone – no personal voice
- Direct quotations are used sparingly and are cited correctly using in-text/parenthetical citations
- Summary is in your own words – DO NOT PLAGIARIZE
- Correct conventions – spelling, grammar, punctuation

Total Points:

Points Earned: