

AP Literature and Composition

Summer Reading

Dr. Dorsey

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Three Required Readings:

1. How to Read Literature Like a Professor by Thomas C. Foster
2. The Joy Luck Club by Amy Tan
3. Read one novel of **literary merit**—if you are in any doubt about what qualifies, talk to me first (this must be a novel new to you—you may not reuse something you have read for another class). A Pulitzer Prize winner might fit the bill. There are many lists you can find on the Internet about Books for the College Bound Student. This pick should be something that interests you: time period, genre, region, theme, particular author.

If possible I would get your own copy of the books so that you can annotate as you read.

Assignment #1

Answer the study guide questions.

Study Guide: How to Read Literature Like a Professor by Thomas C. Foster

Directions: Type the answers (or write in pen) to the following questions on your own sheet of paper. Note: You do not need to write in complete sentences, nor do you need to write the question on your own sheet of paper.

Ch. 1 pgs. 1-6 "Every Trip is a Quest (Except When It's Not)"

1. What are the five characteristics of the quest?

Ch. 2 pgs. 7-14 "Nice to Eat With You: Acts of Communion"

2. List the things, according to Foster, that eating in literature can represent.

Ch. 3 pgs. 15-21 "Nice to Eat You: Acts of Vampires"

3. What are some things besides vampirism that vampires and ghosts represent in literature?

Ch. 4 pgs. 22-27 "If It's Square, It's a Sonnet"

4. Why, according to Foster, is it more difficult to write a short poem than a long one?

Ch. 5 pgs. 28-36 "Now, Where Have I Seen Her Before?"

5. What is the "big secret" Foster reveals in this chapter?

Ch. 6 pgs. 37-46 "When in Doubt, It's from Shakespeare..."

6. Why do so many writers use and quote Shakespeare?

Ch. 7 pgs. 47-56 "...Or the Bible"

7. What do Biblical allusions do for a piece of literature?

Ch. 8 pgs. 57-63 "Hansel and Gretel"

8. (a) What is the literary canon, and (b) what does Foster suggest on pg. 59 as the reason so many writers choose to allude to fairy tales in their works?

Ch. 9 pgs. 64-73 "It's Greek To Me"

9. What are the four great struggles of the human being?

Ch. 10 pgs. 74-81 "It's More Than Just Rain or Snow"

10. What are some of the types of weather such as rain, fog, rainbow, etc., can represent in literature?

Ch. 11 pgs. 87-96 "...More Than It's Gonna Hurt You: Concerning Violence"

11. Choose an act of violence or a death from a piece of literature you have read and using the information in this chapter, identify its literary purpose. Be sure to include specific details to make your answer clear and complete.

Ch. 12 pgs. 97-107 "Is That a Symbol?"

12. (a) Why is symbolic meaning different for each individual reader? (b) What are some of the factors that influence what we understand in our reading?

Ch. 13 pgs. 108-116 "It's All Political"

13. On page 115 Foster explains why most literature can be called "political." Summarize his argument.

Ch. 14 pgs. 117-124 "Yes, She's a Christ Figure, Too"

14. Foster asserts that a character need not have all of the distinguishing characteristics of Jesus Christ in order to be considered a Christ figure in literature. Why? Explain.

Ch. 15 pgs. 125-134 "Flights of Fancy"

15. Does a character always have to actually fly in order for there to be "flying" in a piece of literature? Explain.

Assignment #2

For at least 7 of the 15 chapters in How to Read Literature Like a Professor, explain in detail how something from the How to Read book does or does not apply to a part of the novels you are reading over the summer. For example, if one of the characters in The Joy Luck Club or your other novel fits some of the characteristics discussed in Chapter 14, then write a well developed paragraph about that character as a Christ figure.

Assignment #3

For the novel you choose, write at least 5 journal like entries as you read. Each entry should be at least 250 words (that is a typed double spaced page). Discuss whatever you like, but here are some suggestions: a particular quote, a decision you agree or disagree with made by a character, something symbolic, something you relate to on a personal level.

Please feel free to email me over the summer if you have questions: adorsey118@yahoo.com.

Ch. 16 pgs. 135-142 "It's All About Sex..."

16. What are some things that can represent male and female sexuality in literature?

Ch. 17 pgs. 143-151 "... Except Sex"

17. What are some of the other things that a sex scene can mean?

Ch. 18 pgs. 152-162 "If She Comes Up, It's Baptism"

18. (a) What are some of the things that baptism (or immersion in water) can mean in literature? (b) What are some of the things that drowning can mean in literature?

Ch. 19 pgs. 163-174 "Geography Matters..."

19. What does it mean when an author sends a character south?

Ch. 20 pgs. 175-184 "...So Does Season"

20. What are the symbolic meanings of the seasons?

Interlude pgs. 185-192 "One Story"

21. Summarize Foster's point in this section of the book.

Ch. 21 pgs. 193-200 "Marked For Greatness"

22. Choose a book you have read recently and identify a main character who has some physical marking. Describe and explain why you think the author chose to give him/her that physical trait-what does it mean?

Ch. 22 pgs. 201-206 "He's Blind for a Reason, You Know"

23. For what reason(s) do authors choose to make characters blind in literature?

Ch. 23 pgs. 207-212 "It's Never Just Heart Disease..."

24. What things can "heart trouble" signify in literature?

Ch. 24 pgs. 213-225 "...And Rarely Just Illness"

25. What are the "principles governing the use of disease in works of literature"?

Ch. 25 pgs. 226-234 "Don't Read With Your Eyes"

26. Explain what Foster means by "don't read with your eyes".

Ch. 26 pgs. 235-244 "Is He Serious? And Other Ironies"

27. Explain what Foster means by "irony trumps everything".