



12 AP Literature 2017 - 2018

Summer Reading

Directions: Two essay choices from former AP Literature and Composition examinations are listed for each novel. **Choose one (1) for each novel** and write a well-organized essay in proper MLA form. Please note that what you say is more important than how much you say. Use Times New Roman 12 and double space; do not forget pagination. You must submit your three essays on the first day of class. [50 points each/total = 150 points]

During the first few days of classes, you will have time to discuss the novels; this will be followed by a 50-point assessment on each. [total = 150 points]

Great Expectations

1. Many works of literature not readily identified with the mystery or detective genre nonetheless involve the investigation of a mystery. In these works, the solution to the mystery may be less important than the knowledge gained in the process of the investigation. Write an essay in which you identify a/the mystery in *Great Expectations* and explain how the investigation illuminates the meaning of the work as a whole. Do not merely summarize the plot.
2. Morally ambiguous characters – characters whose behavior discourages readers from identifying them as purely evil or purely good – are at the heart of many works of literature. A morally ambiguous character plays a pivotal role in *Great Expectations*. Write an essay in which you explain both how the character can be viewed as morally ambiguous and why his or her ambiguity is significant to the work as a whole. Avoid mere plot summary

Jane Eyre

1. In some works of literature, a character who appears briefly, or does not appear at all, is a significant presence. Write an essay in which you show how such a character functions in *Jane Eyre*. Do not merely summarize the plot.
2. Writers often highlight the values of a culture or a society by using characters who are alienated from that culture or society because of gender, race, class, or creed. Show how such a character's alienation in *Jane Eyre* reveals the surrounding society's assumptions or moral values. Do not merely summarize the plot.

Pride and Prejudice

1. Select an important character in *Pride and Prejudice* who is a villain. In a well-organized essay analyze the nature of the character's villainy and show how it enhances the meaning of the work. Do not merely summarize the plot.
2. Novels often include scenes of weddings, funerals, parties, and other social occasions. Such scenes may reveal the values of the characters and the society in which they live. Discuss the contribution such a scene in *Pride and Prejudice* makes to the meaning of the work as a whole. Avoid mere plot summary.