

Dear AP Literature and Composition Student,

We are delighted that you have made the brave decision to enroll in AP Literature and Composition for next year. Though difficult, we believe that it can be one of the most rewarding courses of study in our discipline. We will study the craft of the authors and storytellers across a variety of cultures and time periods of humankind. Our goal is to facilitate an experience in which you thrive in the practice of academic discourse about literature. We also hope to engineer a few epiphanies.

Summer reading assignments are difficult to complete, but it is really important that we do them. As instructors, we build our school year under the assumption that you have *actually* read the novels assigned. If you make the choice to read the text in a fake way (you know of the many ways we “read” something for our classes), our classes will be the weaker for it. Actual, honest reading of the texts will validate your commitment to yourself as a scholar of literature and composition. Once you’ve read a novel, the entire experience stays with you forever. It’s something that can never be taken away from you.

The reading assignment for all students taking AP Literature and Composition is on the other side of this letter (or the next page of the digital version of this doc). The reading assignment is the exact same whether you have Reynaga or McCarthy.

Read two stories:

Frankenstein by Mary Shelley

and

Loving Day by Mat Johnson **OR** *Go Tell it on the Mountain* by James Baldwin

While you read, please do the assignment (it’s on the next page of this document). It is due when we begin school in the fall. (The actual date will be posted in the GC)

Notes:

- One of the novels we have chosen for you contains frankly adult content (*Loving Day*). It was not written in such a way as to shelter adolescents from the vicissitudes of sexuality and its consequences. If your personal or family values require you to abstain from this content, you should choose *Go Tell it on the Mountain* as your second choice.
- The other novel, *Frankenstein*, starts with a series of letters. Though it seems a bit dry at first, please know that there is important information in them and that the novel’s narrative pace accelerates as you read further.
- According to Henry David Thoreau, it is what is “wild and uncivilized” or unconventional in literature that attracts (see 1998 Q3 prompt). As you are reading, ask yourself, “How is this story unconventional or different from what I was led to expect?”

We are looking forward to meeting and working with you in the fall.

Regards,

Ms. Reynaga

Mr. McCarthy

If you have further questions, please don’t hesitate to contact us by email:

Ms. Reynaga: jlr_jfkhs@hotmail.com Mr. McCarthy: kc-mccarthy@scusd.edu

Summer Reading Assignment

The readings: *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley

And

Loving Day by Mat Johnson **OR** *Go Tell it on the Mountain* by James Baldwin

The assignment:

REVIEW THE WHOLE ASSIGNMENT BEFORE READING THE NOVELS. Do the following assignment for each of the two novels. You are turning in work for tasks #1-6 below for **BOTH** books.

There are two ways to do the assignment:

- **Direct Annotation of the Text.** Annotate directly on to the pages of the physical books (you'll give us your copy of the book to review when we start in the fall).

OR

- **Annotation On a Separate Paper While You Read.** Read and record all annotations on a separate paper with pen/pencil. Include pages numbers for reference.

Annotation Tasks to complete while you read:

- 1. Questions in the beginning.** For the FIRST 15-20 pages of each book: annotate your text with 3 questions that you would like answered somewhere later in the text.
- 2. Question throughout the rest of the book.** Annotate at least ten more questions you have about the text. Indicate whether or not these questions eventually get answered in the text.
- 3. Setting.** Annotate 10 concrete details that refer to and/or illustrate the setting. Briefly comment on what mood or meaning you get from this passage--make sure that you include abstract nouns (emotion/idea words) in your commentary.
- 4. Character.** Annotate 10 places that contribute to characterization. Briefly comment on how the passage makes you feel about the character--make sure that you include abstract nouns (emotion/idea words) in your commentary.
- 5. Conflict.** Annotate one passage that indicates the conflict. Indicate if this passage is in the exposition, rising action, climax, or resolution.
- 6. First Line/Last Line.** After you have finished the novel, reread the first and last lines of the novel. Briefly explain the significance of the lines.

If you have further questions, please don't hesitate to contact us by email:

Ms. Reynaga: jlr_jfkhs@hotmail.com Mr. McCarthy: kc-mccarthy@scusd.edu