



AP English Literature Summer Reading

May 30, 2023

Greetings and welcome to AP English Literature! This is a fun, yet challenging course designed to strengthen your writing skills and broaden your abilities in analyzing literature. In preparation for our study in the fall, you do have some work to complete over the summer. Please read the assignment below carefully, and be ready to share your thoughts on the reading day one.

ASSIGNMENT

Part 1: Poem selection (**Printed copy required**)

Much of our studies will revolve around poetry, thus we will study poetry on a regular basis through the semester. In preparation for this, select a poem that **you** consider to be worthy of study and instruction in AP English Literature and bring a printed copy to the first day of class. Within the first days of class, you will be expected to write a 250+ word response explaining what makes this a "great" poem.

Part 2: Literary Merit: *The Odyssey*, by Homer (**Annotation required**)

Read *The Odyssey*. Translated by W.H.D. Rouse, published by Signet Classics ISBN 978-0-451-47433-9. If needed, you may borrow one which will be available at the front desk of BSM over the summer. Simply add your name to the textbook check-out list and take a copy. If possible, purchase your own copy so you can annotate the text directly.

1. Read Rouse's translation of *The Odyssey*.
2. As you read, **mark significant passages worth rereading** by putting a sticky note in the margin.
3. After you read, **annotate five** of the passages you marked with your questions and ideas (see suggestions on the on the next page). If borrowing a book, print select pages from the online pdf and annotate those. Passages should be a half to a whole page in length.
4. Upon your return to school, you will be tasked with writing a 250+ word reflection explaining what the phrase, "literary merit" means to you, and why this work has literary merit.

Throughout the year, we will be reading several novels and plays in preparation for the AP English exam; the course itself will often feel like a quest, or a journey. Like Odysseus, the main character in *The Odyssey*, we start with nothing but words, but with words we break silences, with language we open dialogue, with narrative we construct meaning, and out of shared stories we create empathy and connection.

The reading and the poem are due on the first day of class. I recommend you read *The Odyssey* closer to the start of school so that the details will be fresh in your mind. Until we meet in August, I wish you the best of summer.

Sincerely,

Ms. Dominguez

AP Literature and Composition Teacher

Model UN Co-Advisor

adominguez@bsmschool.org

BSM Book Policy Update

Beginning in the fall of 2023, the English Department at BSM is *strongly recommending* that students purchase their own copies of books. As a department, we have noticed a drastic increase in reading comprehension and analytical skills when students engage in active reading by annotating their texts. This observation is supported by countless studies.

For instance, annotating develops metacognition, writing growth, and deeper understanding while improving student learning outcomes (Johnson). Additionally, annotating can help students break down complex texts (Lloyd et al).

Although we recognize that buying books poses an additional expense for families, we believe the benefits are worth the investment. With that said, we will have books available for families who choose not to purchase them; however, in most cases, students will not be able to annotate the texts, although we will provide transparent post-it notes.

Book lists and purchase information will be available the first day of class.

For further reading:

Corrigan, Paul T. "[Attending to the Act of Reading: Critical Reading, Contemplative Reading, and Active Reading.](#)"

Johnson, Matthew. "[How Students and Teachers Benefit from Students Annotating Their Own Writing.](#)"

Lloyd, Zena, et. Al. "[Using the Annotating Strategy to Improve Students' Academic Achievement in Social Studies.](#)"

Active Reading Strategies

Choose the strategies that work best for you or that best suit your purpose.

- **Identify and define any unfamiliar terms.**
- **Bracket the main idea or thesis of the reading, and put an asterisk next to it.** Pay particular attention to the introduction or opening paragraphs to locate this information.
- **Put down your highlighter. Make marginal notes or comments instead.** Every time you feel the urge to highlight something, write instead. You can summarize the text, ask questions, give assent, protest vehemently. You can also write down key words to help you recall where important points are discussed. Above all, strive to enter into a dialogue with the author.
- **Write questions in the margins, and then answer the questions in a reading journal or on a separate piece of paper.**
- **Make outlines, flow charts, or diagrams that help you to map and to understand ideas visually.**
- **Write a summary of an essay or chapter in your own words.** Do this in less than a page. Capture the essential ideas and perhaps one or two key examples. This approach offers a great way to be sure that you know what the reading really says or is about.
- **Write your own exam question based on the reading.**
- **Teach what you have learned to someone else!** Research clearly shows that teaching is one of the most effective ways to learn. If you try to explain aloud what you have been studying, (1) you'll transfer the information from short-term to long-term memory, and (2) you'll quickly discover what you understand — and what you don't.

Taken from The McGraw Center for Teaching and Learning at Princeton University, 2016.