

English 7/8 Honors Summer Assignment

Congratulations on your decision to enroll in English 7/8 Honors! While new to us at Doherty (and absent from the district for a couple of decades), this course is designed to

1. Teach the analysis of literature at a high level
2. Offer college-level expectations
3. Engage students in a variety of responses to a variety of literature
4. Require high-level involvement on the part of students and instructor

What it is NOT:

1. Easier than AP Lit. This course is designed to maintain the high level of rigor WITHOUT the emphasis on taking a test in May. Will you be prepared for the test? Sure – but you won't learn any cool strategies. You'll just know how to work with literature very well.
2. A long, hard slog to the end of the year. We will read many different types of literature – some you may not expect; some you may not like. All are assigned for important reasons, though.

Summer assignments may seem annoying, but I urge you to take them in the spirit meant. We want to keep you thinking, while still having time to enjoy your break. Please don't wait until the last minute to do these – spread them out over your time. None of it is outrageously difficult, but I will expect you to know the texts (Spark Notes will not help – really. Ask any of my former students.) and be ready to engage in discussions immediately. You may purchase these books or find them at a library. *Be aware that annotation is required and you must have the books in your possession when we discuss them.*

Your Assignments:

Part I: How to read a book.

You think you know? I HIGHLY RECOMMEND that you read *How to Read Literature like a Professor* by Thomas C. Foster. This book is a lively introduction to what it is English teachers do when they read. We will discuss this assignment during the first week of class.

You will create a literary journal -- For chapters 1-26, write down the essential understanding about literature it represents. Indicate 1 or 2 examples from literature you have read in the past that fulfill this idea. Then find or create a visual representation of this concept. Complete the exercise in Chapter 27. You will continue to use this all year, so a 1" 3-ring binder is highly recommended.

Part II: Reading Literature

Our opening theme for the year is ***Identity: How Others See Us; How We See Ourselves***

To prepare for this, you will read one short novel and one play.

- 1) Shakespeare's *The Tempest*. Feel free to buy any edition EXCEPT "No Fear Shakespeare." Modern language does not provide a reasonable experience of the drama. Learn to love the subtleties of Shakespeare's language in the original!
- 2) Antoine de Saint-Exupery's *The Little Prince*. While often considered a children's book, it is a lovely fable about responsibility, identity, and seeing with more than the eyes.

English 7/8 Honors Summer Assignment

While reading, annotate the texts with special attention to literary devices and the themes of identity, self and other. Questions to consider (and find concrete text evidence, please):

- *The Tempest* is a Romance (not “romantic”). Determine a definition that works for the Renaissance. *The Little Prince* is a fable. Find a useful definition that helps you more correctly analyze the work.
- Who is the “other” in these works? How are they defined as such?
- How do characters respond upon meeting someone new? Are there stereotypes? If so, why?
- What expectations of characters are fulfilled within the plots? What flouted? What about your expectations?
- How is identity determined differently in Shakespeare as opposed to the Modernist *Little Prince*? Is it fixed? Determined by social class? How do colonial/ visitor attitudes differ?
- How is the issue of personal/social responsibility handled? How does the main character in each “return”?
- What different attitudes are demonstrated towards youth and maturity?
- How do the authors handle characterization (direct, indirect, dialogue...)?
- What questions are we left with at the end?
- Overall – what similarities and differences do you find in tone?
- Ultimately, make an attempt at themes. Remember – no clichés (trust me – neither of these say “live life to the fullest!”).
 - Keep character lists with descriptions and 1 telling/characterizing quote for each one!
 - Consider titles. What alternates can you think of? What expectations do we have based upon the ones given?
 - Be prepared to discuss these in depth within the first week.

Part III: Summer Writing

Most of you will have to write an essay for either college entrance or for scholarship opportunities. This essay is an opportunity to let your personality shine through.

Choose one of the following prompts.

A typed (double-spaced) **STRONG** draft is due on August 18th. These should be 250 – 500 words in length. We will continue editing and revising throughout the first quarter.

- 1) It has been said (by Andy Warhol) that “in the future, everyone will be famous for 15 minutes.” Describe your 15 minutes. (New York University)
- 2) Describe Tuesday. (University of Chicago)
- 3) You’ve just written a 300-page autobiography. Send us page 217. (University of Pennsylvania)

English 7/8 Honors Summer Assignment

- 4) If you could be a “fly on the wall” to observe any situation – historical, personal, or otherwise – describe what you would choose to observe and why. What would you hope to learn and how would it benefit you?
- 5) What invention would the world be better off without and why? (Kalamazoo College)
- 6) Tell us about one of the best conversations you’ve had. (Stanford)
- 7) Sartre said, “Hell is other people.” Streisand sang, “People who need people are the luckiest people in the world.” With whom do you agree and why? (Amherst)
- 8) What are the responsibilities of an educated person? (University of Puget Sound)
- 9) Describe a personal habit that helps to define you as a person.
- 10) If you are already interested in a particular college, use an essay topic from the current application form or website. Indicate specifically where you found it!

I’m looking forward to an enjoyable and rewarding year with each of you!

Please email me if you have any questions. I’ll be checking all summer.

Mrs. Suzanne Segady

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