

South-Doyle High School, Eng. I Honors Summer Reading 2014/15

This upcoming school year, students can expect to be introduced to reading literature for a deeper meaning. Rather than reading literature merely on a surface level (which characters do what actions), the honors students will begin learning how to look beyond the general plotlines and how to “read between the lines.” In order to prepare them for this new experience, each honors student should read each of the following titles in their entirety and complete the following assignments prior to the first day of school:

***How to Read Literature Like a Professor* by Thomas C. Foster**

This title is recommended – NOT required!! *How to Read Literature Like a Professor*, by Thomas C. Foster, is a lively and entertaining “how-to” manual for reading literature beyond the surface level story, allowing the reader some insight into the deeper meaning. This book explores a wide variety of literary devices that authors often employ, many of which are explored in the freshman and sophomore Honors English classes. Some may find chapters 16 & 17 of the book objectionable due to the fact that they deal with the symbolism of sexuality in literature, but be rest assured that neither of these chapters is assigned, nor will they be discussed in class. If you choose to read portions of this text during the summer, the majority of the literary analysis work during the English I Honors will focus on chapters 1, 2, 5, 12, 13, 14, 19, 25 & 26.

The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* by Mark Twain

The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, by Mark Twain, is debatably one of the greatest novels of all time. Ernest Hemingway once said, “All modern American literature comes from one book by Mark Twain called 'Huckleberry Finn.' All American writing comes from that. There was nothing before. There has been nothing as good since.” But, because of the extensive use of racially insensitive language, it is also often criticized by those who believe that it encourages negative stereotypes. This assumption, however, could not be farther from the truth! Twain weaves seriously valuable lessons into a comedic, and often times outlandish, tale about an adventure on the Mississippi river. It can be analyzed on multiple levels, and because of this, it is one of the most widely taught titles in American schools.

Assignment:

The Huck Finn Cliff Notes Project – Each student will compose a “Cliff Notes” style booklet that consists of the following segments:

- **Title Page** – Complete with image, title, and name
- **Table of Contents** – labeling each section of the booklet
- **Author Bio** – Basic biography highlighting the main points in Mark Twain’s life – minimum 100 words
- **Main Characters** – describe each of the following characters in the novel – minimum 75 words each
 - Huckleberry Finn
 - Jim
 - Tom Sawyer

- **Setting** – In Chapter 19 of Foster’s book, he emphasizes the importance of geography in a work of literature. What is the setting of novel AND what impact does this have on the plot? – minimum 100 words
- **Plot** – Basic summary of the main points of the plot progression (exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, resolution) – minimum 100 words
- **Symbolism** – In Chapter 12 of Foster’s text, he expounds on the importance of symbolism in works of literature. What do you feel is the symbolic meaning of the Mississippi River for Huck and Jim? **Give evidence from the novel to support your argument.** -minimum of 100 words
- **Analysis** – Choose 1 of the following (NOT ALL THREE!!!) – minimum 200 words
 - In Chapter 1 of Foster’s text, he explains how in books/films that involve a quest, the main characters spend the majority of the time trying to find something/someplace. By the end of the book/film, rather than finding the object or place, the main character ends up finding some sort of enlightenment about society. Describe how *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* fits the model of “the quest tale.” **Be sure to support your argument with evidence from the novel.**
 - Mark Twain is often praised for his ability to build characterization through character vernacular (the way they talk), specifically with the main characters of *Huckleberry Finn*. Describe ways that Twain uses specific types of vernacular to create a vivid portrait of certain characters AND explain why you think that he decides to do this. **Use specific evidence from the novel to support your argument.**
 - Twain’s *Huckleberry Finn* is sometimes criticized not only for its use of racially sensitive language but also for Twain’s portrayal of Jim. Critics state that Jim’s character promotes negative stereotypes of African-American people. Others state that Twain’s use of characterization is specifically crafted to paint an accurate image of the South during this time period. In your opinion, does Twain promote negative stereotypes of African-Americans OR is this simply a reflection of the time/place that this novel was written in. **Use evidence from the novel to support your argument.**

Grading

As stated above, all assignments are expected to be completed & ready to turn in on the first full day of school (Aug. 12th). All of these assignments are to be written using the student’s original thoughts and words. The internet is a wonderful resource to aid in the understanding of a text, but anyone caught using this as a **replacement** for any of the readings will receive a zero & possible further disciplinary actions (yes, I have read all of the popular sites & will be able to spot them fairly easily). While grammar, sentence structure, and word choice will not be the primary focus of the grading process, students should be warned that excessive grammatical errors may hinder the final grade. **Also, those students with excessively bad handwriting (you know who you are) should consider typing assignments to avoid reader confusion and the negative impacts that this may have on the final grade.** If there are any questions or if you wish to have alternate reading assignments, please feel free to email Mrs. Peebles at karen.peebles@knoxschools.org or Ms. McGreevy at cammie.mcgreevy@knoxschools.org

***Alternate title available upon request**