



AP English: Literature and Composition

Summer Reading Assignment  
Mr. Balliro

The Advanced Placement English: Literature and Composition Summer Reading Assignment is a comprehensive study of three works of literary merit (either novels or plays).

- One work must be from the list of books published before 1900.
- One work must be from the list of books published after 1900.
- The third work may be from either list OR a work of literary merit approved by the instructor.
  - This could be a novel, a play, OR a book of poetry (for example, Jelly Roll: A Blues by Kevin Young). Email me, Mr. Balliro, at [jballiro@achs.net](mailto:jballiro@achs.net) or see me before the end of the year to have your third work approved if it is not from the list.
  - **DO NOT ASSUME I WILL SAY YES!** The book you want to read may be on the syllabus for the year.

Complete the assignment for each novel that you choose:

Pre-1900 Works	Post-1900 Works
<u>The Awakening</u> by Kate Chopin (1899) <u>Pride and Prejudice</u> by Jane Austen (1813) <i>Medea</i> by Euripides (431 BC) [2006 translation by Michael Collier ISBN: 9780195145663]	<u>A Prayer for Owen Meany</u> by John Irving (1989) <u>Purple Hibiscus</u> by Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie (2003) <i>Death of a Salesman</i> by Arthur Miller (1949)

**Assignment:**

Keep a dialectical journal for each work. Dialectical means “the art or practice of arriving at the truth by the exchange of logical arguments” (dictionary.com). A dialectical journal, then, is used to arrive at the “truth” of a text by engaging in conversation with the written work itself.

Divide your paper into two columns (you may write or type your assignment). As you read, note 15 passages in each novel that stand out. In the left-hand column of your paper, record meaningful quotes. Don’t forget page numbers! In the right-hand column, write your critical response to the text.

Specifically, your dialectical thinking should include:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● making judgements</li> <li>● asking questions</li> <li>● connecting to real life</li> <li>● connecting to other works of literature</li> <li>● drawing inferences</li> <li>● developing insights</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● comparing and contrasting</li> <li>● drawing conclusions</li> <li>● predicting consequences</li> <li>● analyzing the writer’s use of specific language and rhetorical devices</li> </ul>
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\* See example, but note that your responses should fill most of a column of a typed page.

Example Dialectical Journal from Shirley Jackson's short story "The Lottery"

1. "The morning of June 27th was clear and sunny, with the fresh warmth of a full summer day; the flowers were blossoming profusely and the grass was richly green" (43).

Hmmm. The opening sentence suggests a mood of promise and possibility. Traditionally, summer is a time when children are out of school, crops grow plentifully before a fall harvest, and the weather is generally wonderful. "Flowers blossoming...grass green," conveys a climate of hope, beauty, and life. What does this have to do with a lottery?

2. "Although the villagers had forgotten the ritual...they still remembered to use stones"(46).

Wait a minute, a shift in perspective. All along we've had a viewpoint much like a play; only seeing the characters actions and dialogue. This is different. Now, the narrator glances into their thoughts. What are they going to do to Tessie? These seemingly nice people are barbaric. They're going to stone a woman in the community for no apparent reason. Maybe this shift in perspective helps to underscore the horror of their actions.