

Dear Future AP English student,

Welcome to AP English Literature and Composition! I am glad that you have decided to take this rigorous and exciting course. AP English is a course designed to foster independence and critical thinking. I encourage you to read frequently and widely and reflect on your reading. **This summer I am asking each of you to read a minimum of two novels.** All AP English students will read *The Awakening*, by Kate Chopin. The other novel you will choose from the attached list. This list has been derived from previous AP English tests, from National Council of Teachers of English recommendations, from recommendations of Honors instructors, and from personal experience. It is very eclectic and covers fiction, non-fiction, and drama.

To assist with preparation for next year, I am asking you to complete two assignments related to the novels you will be reading. These two assignments are due the first day of class. *The Awakening* will be the first novel we discuss in the fall. I recommend you read that novel towards the end of the summer in order to be prepared for the discussion. If you have any questions regarding the assignment, please feel free to email me. **Please put both assignments in the same notebook in order keep them organized. Both assignments are to be handwritten.**

You will be receiving *The Awakening* from your junior English teacher. Please select one additional novel from the attached list, and obtain a copy for the assignment. It is not necessary to purchase the novel, although I recommend using a copy you can annotate to assist with your critical study of the text.

In order to hit the ground running in the fall, please be prepared with your novels, a journal containing your assignments, and a one inch binder. The binder will be used to store notes on novels, practice tests, essays, and other classroom materials. The binder will also be used as a method of submitting some assignments, as in a portfolio type assignment.

I look forward to our class in the fall. If you have any questions, email is the best way to get a hold of me during the summer.

Sincerely,

Paul Cook
AP English Teacher
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Independent Novel Assignment

As you read this summer, please keep a journal of your thoughts on what you read. I suggest a Mead Composition notebook, but you may use whatever you are comfortable with. Although a journal is informal in nature, please try to use proper spelling, grammar, and standard English conventions. This assignment should be handwritten, and as always, neat handwriting is appreciated. In your journal, please address the following:

Pre-Reading Activity

In your journal record the factors that lead you to pick the reading you did for your independent novel. Was it the book cover, the brief synopsis of the book, someone's recommendation, the length?

Then record your expectations of what this book will be about. **The pre-reading activity should be at least one page (but no more than two please).**

Reading Activities

Divide the length of the book into three fairly equal parts (unless the reading suggests some other division). For each section, record the following:

1. A brief summary of what has happened in this section of the novel. Please indicate the pages covered in each section.
2. Your comments about key issues in the book, including how you react to the characters and to the plot, what themes you see developing, and what areas interest or confuse you?

This section of your journal should be at least three pages in length total.

Post Reading Activities

At the end of your journal, reflect on your understanding of the book. What meaning did you draw from the book? How might the book relate to your life or to today's world? Use examples and quotes from the book to answer these questions. **This section should be at least two pages in length.**

Independent Novel Reading List

You may choose to read any of the titles below. Please choose a novel you have not already read. This includes your independent novel choice from sophomore English, and any literature circle book you read junior year. I suggest you visit a website like amazon.com to read synopses of the novels below to choose one you are interested in.

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| <i>Angela's Ashes</i> —McCourt | <i>The Metamorphosis</i> —Kafka |
| <i>Bastard out of Carolina</i> --Allison | <i>Mists of Avalon</i> —Bradley |
| <i>Bel Canto</i> —Patchett | <i>1984</i> —Orwell |
| <i>Black Boy</i> —Wright | <i>On the Road</i> —Kerouac |
| <i>The Bluest Eye</i> —Morrison | <i>A Passage to India</i> —Forster |
| <i>Cat's Eye</i> —Atwood | <i>Pigs in Heaven</i> —Kingsolver |
| <i>The Chosen</i> —Potok | <i>Pilgrim at Tinker Creek</i> —Dillard |
| <i>Cold Mountain</i> —Frazier | <i>The Plague</i> —Camus |
| <i>The Color Purple</i> —Walker | <i>Plainsong</i> —Haruf |
| <i>The Dive from Clausen's Pier</i> —Packer | <i>A Prayer for Owen Meany</i> —Irving |
| <i>Five Quarters of the Orange</i> —Harris | <i>Prodigal Summer</i> --Kingsolver |
| <i>Go Down, Moses</i> —Faulkner | <i>Pygmalion</i> —Shaw |
| <i>Girl with a Pearl Earring</i> —Chevalier | <i>A Room of One's Own</i> —Woolf |
| <i>Going After Cacciato</i> —O'Brien | <i>Schindler's List</i> —Keneally |
| <i>Gulliver's Travels</i> —Swift | <i>Slaughterhouse Five</i> —Vonnegut |
| <i>The Handmaid's Tale</i> —Atwood | <i>Sound and the Fury</i> —Faulkner |
| <i>Horse Whisperer</i> —Evans | <i>Snow Falling on Cedars</i> —Guterson |
| <i>I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings</i> —Angelou | <i>The Sparrow</i> —Russell |
| <i>Invisible Man</i> —Ellison | <i>The Stranger</i> —Camus |
| <i>Jane Eyre</i> —Brontë | <i>Farewell to Arms</i> —Hemingway |
| <i>Jude, the Obscure</i> —Hardy | <i>Tess of the d'Urbervilles</i> —Hardy |
| <i>Left Hand of Darkness</i> —LeGuin | <i>Things Fall Apart</i> —Achebe |
| <i>The Living</i> —Dillard | <i>A Thousand Acres</i> —Smiley |
| <i>March</i> —Brooks | <i>The Pictures of Dorian Gray</i> – Wilde |
| <i>Wuthering Heights</i> - Brontë | <i>Ethan Frome</i> – Wharton |

***The Awakening* Assignment**

The Awakening should be read fairly close to the start of school. This will be the first novel we discuss, so you will want to have it as fresh as possible in your memory. Please keep a journal as you read the novel. This journal will have three distinct sections to it.

Pre-Reading Activities

1. Look into the life of the author, Kate Chopin. Write down any interesting pieces of biographical information that may have impacted her writing of *The Awakening*. Very often an author's experiences color or shape what he/she writes about.

2. Answer each of the following questions prior to your reading the novel. These should be the first entries in your journal.

a. Each of us dreams of finding that one person who will fulfill our needs and become a life-long companion. Describe the kind of person that would fulfill your dreams. Give this some thought before writing your response.

b. Society often places expectations and restrictions upon us that are out of our control. What sort of expectations and restrictions does society place on you? For the purpose of this entry, consider everything that makes up who you are, including age, gender, ethnicity, religion, part of the world you are from, socioeconomic background, talents and abilities; anything that society uses to define you.

This part of your journal should be at least two pages in length.

Reading Activities

As you read the novel, create a double-entry quote log. Divide your page lengthwise. On the left-hand side, list quotes from the novel that you found interesting, meaningful, or revealing about the development of the characters, the plot, and the themes. On the right-hand side of the page, opposite each quote, explain in your own words what the quote means to you or reveals to you. Make connections to yourself and to other things you have read.

This section should be a minimum 3 pages in length, however AP students should always strive to rise above the minimum. Your quote log should reflect all parts of the novel.

Post-Reading Activities

At the end of the novel, reflect on the choices that Edna makes, and the motivations behind them. Choose several major choices Edna makes for this assignment. Examine her motivation, how those choices are received by others, and the results of having made those choices. Please include the choice Edna makes at the end of the novel in this journal entry as well.

This part of the journal should be a minimum two pages in length.