

## 12<sup>th</sup> Grade Summer Reading Response--Journal Writing Guide

Rising twelfth grade English students are expected to write their reflections and reactions in journal form while reading their summer selections. The journal assignments, one for each of the required books (two for Honors students), will be due during the first few weeks of school. Each journal writing assignment will be counted as a grade. Thorough, thoughtful, and reflective responses to the following prompts are to be provided in the journal. Typed work is expected. In order to earn the highest grade, students should complete all of the following requirements carefully and completely:

1. Identify the book's title, author's name, copyright date, and number of pages. Underline or italicize the title.
2. In paragraphs, give a brief summary of the plot, including the beginning, the middle, and the end (250-300 words).
3. Explain the significance of the title. Authors rarely choose a title randomly. Dig for metaphorical meaning. The title may be symbolic or it may be representative of some specific incident in the book. In any case, consider carefully the significance of the title and explain your thinking.
4. Make a list of the main characters and list five adjectives to describe each one. Describe your first impressions of the protagonist. Describe your first impressions of the antagonist (Research these terms if you don't remember what they mean). Cite(that is, quote word for word using quotation marks) at least three text examples that support your response.
5. Are the protagonist and antagonist dynamic or static, round or flat characters? (Again, research these terms if necessary.) Describe how these characters change or remain the same throughout the story. Tell what happens to make the character change or explain why and how he/she remains static. For example, does the character have to make a choice, is there a conflict or problem that needs resolution, does the character have to be courageous, etc..., or does something specific in his/her life change? If you are reading a non-fiction book, apply this question the author or who the book is about.
6. Cite and note the page number of a special passage from the book that you think is important or worth rereading. (Maybe it explains something about the character, or perhaps it describes a very special event, or perhaps it holds a certain resonance or connection with you, the reader.) You must explain why you chose this passage. Dig deep for a connection here.
7. Sketch a scene from the book. Stick figures are fine, but work to impress your teacher on this one! Feel free to add detail and color your scene.
8. To highlight the significance of this book, write a 5-8 sentences response to each of the following:
  - What life lessons have you learned (or have been reinforced) from reading this book?
  - Analyze the book on its literary merit. Academically speaking, what can a student of literature learn about style, figurative language, literary devices, plot, character, setting, flashback, flash-forward, etc... from this book?
  - What did you dislike the most about this book? Explain using details and examples from the selection.

## English IV Honors Summer Reading List

Pick one of the following novels, then pick another from the second section:

Title: *Watership Down*

Author: Adams, Richard

Description: Richard Adams's extraordinary bestseller *Watership Down* takes us to a world we have never truly seen: to the remarkable life that teems in the fields, forests, and riverbanks, far beyond our cities and towns. It is a powerful saga of courage, leadership, and survival; and epic tale of a hardy band of Berkshire rabbits forced to flee the destruction of their fragile community and their trials and triumphs in the face of extraordinary adversity as they pursue a glorious dream called "home."

Title: *Pride and Prejudice*

Author: Austin, Jane

Description: The romantic clash of two opinionated young people provides the sustaining theme of Jane Austen's 1813 masterwork *Pride and Prejudice*. Spirited Elizabeth Bennet is one of a family of five daughters; with no male heir, the Bennet estate must someday pass to their priggish cousin Collins. Therefore, the girls must marry well—and the arrogant bachelor Mr. Darcy is Elizabeth's elusive match. An entertaining portrait of matrimonial rites and rivalries, *Pride and Prejudice* is timeless in its hilarity and its honesty; readers will immediately understand why Austen herself called the book "my own darling child."

Title: *Jane Eyre*

Author: Bronte, Charlotte

Description: Orphaned into the household of her Aunt Reed at Gateshead, subject to the cruel regime at Lowood charity school, *Jane Eyre* nonetheless emerges unbroken in spirit and integrity. She takes up the post of governess at Thornfield, falls in love with Mr. Rochester, and discovers the impediment to their lawful marriage in a story that transcends melodrama to portray a woman's passionate search for a wider and richer life than Victorian society traditionally allowed. With a heroine full of yearning, the dangerous secrets she encounters, and the choices she finally makes, Charlotte Bronte's innovative and enduring romantic novel continues to engage and provoke readers.

Title: *Wuthering Heights*

Author: Bronte, Emily

Description: *Wuthering Heights*, Emily Bronte's only novel, is one of the pinnacles of 19th century English literature. It's the story of Heathcliff, an orphan who falls in love with a girl above his class, loses her, and devotes the rest of his life to wreaking revenge on her family. In early nineteenth-century Yorkshire, the passionate attachment between a headstrong young girl and a foundling boy brought up by her father causes disaster for them and many others, even in the next generation

Title: *The Stranger*

Author: Camus, Albert

Description: Through the story of an ordinary man unwittingly drawn into a senseless murder on an Algerian beach, Camus explored what he termed "the nakedness of man faced with the absurd."

Title: *Through the Looking Glass*

Author: Carroll, Lewis

Description: *The Mad Hatter*, *the Ugly Duchess*, *the Mock Turtle*, *the Queen of Hearts*, *the Cheshire Cat*—characters each more eccentric than the last, and that could only have come from Lewis Carroll, the master of sublime nonsense. In these two brilliant burlesques he created two of the most famous and fantastic novels of all time that not only stirred our imagination but revolutionized literature.

Title: *Heart of Darkness*

Author: Conrad, Joseph

Description: Joseph Conrad's '*Heart of Darkness*' is widely regarded as one of the most significant works of English literature and part of the Western canon.. This highly symbolic story is actually a story within a story, or frame narrative. It follows Marlow as he recounts, from dusk through to late night, his adventure into the Congo to a group of men aboard a ship anchored in the Thames Estuary. The story details an

incident when Marlow, an Englishman, took a foreign assignment as a ferry-boat captain, employed by a Belgian trading company.

Title: A Tale of Two Cities

Author: Dickens, Charles

Description: Against the backdrop of the French Revolution, Dickens unfolds a masterpiece of drama, adventure, and courage featuring Charles Darnay, a man falsely accused of treason. He bears an uncanny resemblance to the dissolute, yet noble Sydney Carton. Brilliantly plotted, the novel culminates in a daring prison escape in the shadow of the guillotine.

Title: Bleak House

Author: Dickens, Charles

Description: The case of Jarndyce v. Jarndyce—a dispute over a vast fortune left by a miser who died intestate—has occupied the Court of Chancery for years. When Lady Dedlock faints upon recognizing the handwriting in one of the documents pertaining to the case, her sinister lawyer, Tulkinghorn, immediately suspects a hidden secret, and an opportunity for blackmail—but he is playing a dangerous game, and is soon found dead: a victim of murder. It is down to Detective Inspector Bucket to solve the mystery. Dickens was fascinated by the sensational crime cases of his day. His preoccupations—with crime and the legal system, with social injustice—are dramatically evident in *Bleak House*: at once a classic crime novel and a classic of world literature.

Title: The Mill on the Floss

Author: George Eliot

Description: This Eliot novel tells the story of Tom and Maggie Tulliver, a pair of siblings who grow up together on a river in early nineteenth century England. While Tom's reserved nature and Maggie's idealism produce differences that strain their love in times of hardship, the two ultimately reconcile when confronted with certain death. A powerful work on individual tenacity in the face of oppressive circumstance, *The Mill on the Floss* remains one of Eliot's most powerful works on unconditional solidarity and love.

Title: Murder in the Cathedral

Author: Eliot, TS

Description: The Archbishop Thomas Becket speaks fatal words before he is martyred in T. S. Eliot's best-known drama, based on the murder of the Archbishop of Canterbury in 1170. Praised for its poetically masterful handling of issues of faith, politics, and the common good, T. S. Eliot's play bolstered his reputation as the most significant poet of his time.

Title: Grimm's Complete Fairy Tales

Author: Grimm, Jacob and Wilhelm

Description: They are the stories we've known since we were children. Rapunzel. Hansel and Gretel. Cinderella. Sleeping Beauty. But the works originally collected by the Brothers Grimm in the early 1800s are not necessarily the versions we heard before bedtime. They're darker and often don't end very happily—but they're often far more interesting.

Title: Ulysses

Author: Joyce, James

Description: Originally damned as obscure and obscene, Joyce's masterpiece now stands as one of the great literary achievements of the 20th century. Loosely based on the *Odyssey*, it follows Leopold Bloom and other Dubliners through a seemingly ordinary summer day and night in 1904 — a typical day, transformed by Joyce's narrative powers into an epic celebration of life.

Title: The Metamorphosis

Author: Kafka, Franz

Description: Franz Kafka's haunting short novel, *The Metamorphosis*, explores the trials and tribulations of a young man struggling under the expectations of those around him. Kafka's magical realism takes the reader from Gregor Samsa's transformation from man to giant insect and through his subsequent isolation. *The Metamorphosis* is threaded with universal themes, making the work a deeply moving and often disturbing journey into the human psyche. Kafka writes with a depth of emotion and intellectual sincerity that continue to resonate with readers of across the globe today.

Title: 1984

Author: Orwell, George

Description: Written in 1948, 1984 was George Orwell's chilling prophecy about the future. And while 1984 has come and gone, Orwell's narrative is timelier than ever. 1984 presents a startling and haunting vision of the world, so powerful that it is completely convincing from start to finish. No one can deny the power of this novel, its hold on the imaginations of multiple generations of readers, or the resiliency of its admonitions—a legacy that seems only to grow with the passage of time.

Title: Frankenstein

Author: Shelly, Mary

Description: Few creatures of horror have seized readers' imaginations and held them for so long as the anguished monster of Shelley's Frankenstein. The story of Victor Frankenstein's monstrous creation and the havoc it caused has enthralled generations of readers and inspired countless writers of horror and suspense.

Title: The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde

Author: Stevenson, Robert Louis

Description: In this harrowing tale of good and evil, the mild-mannered Dr. Jekyll develops a potion that unleashes his secret, inner persona—the loathsome, twisted Mr. Hyde.

Title: Dracula

Author: Stoker, Bram

Description: A dreary castle, blood-thirsty vampires, open graves at midnight, and other gothic touches fill this chilling tale about a young Englishman's confrontation with the evil Count Dracula. A horror romance as deathless as any vampire, the blood-curdling tale still continues to hold readers spellbound a century later.

Title: Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead

Author: Stoppard, Tom

Description: Acclaimed as a modern dramatic masterpiece, Rosencrantz & Guildenstern Are Dead is the fabulously inventive tale of Hamlet as told from the worm's-eye view of the bewildered Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, two minor characters in Shakespeare's play. In Tom Stoppard's best-known work, this Shakespearean Laurel and Hardy finally get a chance to take the lead role, but do so in a world where echoes of Waiting for Godot resound, where reality and illusion intermix, and where fate leads our two heroes to a tragic but inevitable end.

Title: War and Peace

Author: Tolstoy, Leo

Description: War and Peace broadly focuses on Napoleon's invasion of Russia in 1812 and follows three of the most well-known characters in literature: Pierre Bezukhov, the illegitimate son of a count who is fighting for his inheritance and yearning for spiritual fulfillment; Prince Andrei Bolkonsky, who leaves his family behind to fight in the war against Napoleon; and Natasha Rostov, the beautiful young daughter of a nobleman who intrigues both men.

One of your novels must be from the following:

Title: Perceval: The Story of the Grail

Author: de Troyes, Chretien

Description: In this verse translation of Perceval; or, The Story of the Grail, Ruth Harwood Cline restores to life the thematically crucial Arthurian tale of the education of a knight in his search for the Holy Grail.

Title: Tristan & Iseult

Author: Sutcliff, Rosemary

Description: Tristan defeats Ireland's greatest warrior and gains the friendship of his uncle, the King of Cornwall, who entrusts him with a very special mission: to sail the seas in search of a queen.

Long before the time of chivalrous knights, fair ladies, and turreted castles, Tristan defeats Ireland's greatest warrior and gains the friendship of his uncle, the King of Cornwall, who entrusts him with a very special mission: to sail the seas in search of a queen.

Title: A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court

Author: Twain, Mark

Description: Hank Morgan finds himself transported back to England's Dark Ages — where he is immediately captured and sentenced to death at Camelot. Fortunately, he's quick-witted, and in the process of saving his life he turns himself into a celebrity — winning himself the position of prime minister as well as the lasting enmity of Merlin.

Title: The Once and Future King

Author: White, TH

Description: The Once and Future King is T.H. White's masterful retelling of the saga of King Arthur, a fantasy classic as legendary as Excalibur and Camelot, and a poignant story of adventure, romance, and magic that has enchanted readers for generations.