

AP ENGLISH LITERATURE & COMPOSITION
Summer Reading Assignment

Mandatory Reading Selections

- *Things Fall Apart* by Chinua Achebe
- *Man's Search For Meaning* by Viktor Frankl
- "Dover Beach" by Matthew Arnold (*Understanding Poetry* 333)

ASSIGNMENT

Designed to introduce you to the amount, intensity, and level of reading assignments intrinsic to an AP English course, this summer reading assignment will help you develop the critical reading and writing skills requisite to success in a college-level course. You should approach the reading and writing assignments with a sincere desire both to prepare yourself for the course and to deepen your understanding of the historical, political, religious, and cultural contexts that influence human experience—past, present, or future.

With these points in mind, you will prepare a critical response journal, a type of writing that requires you to engage in a particular text with an open, sincere attitude, to explore possible meanings and implications, to question ambiguity or discrepancies, and to grapple with disquietude or other emotional responses to the text. In short, journal writing allows you as a reader and writer to explore ideas, *your* ideas, and to interact with a text on your terms, at your level of understanding; therefore, journal writing has no clear-cut "right" or "wrong" answer to the questions posed. Instead, you should strive to answer questions honestly without the use of materials other than your own thoughts and ideas.

Journal responses are due on **Friday, August 17**, and will be used during the first quarter to inspire conversations and essays about the themes, issues, conflicts, ideas, and situations presented in the readings.

Requirements:

- All journal entries should be typed, collated and stapled together with a cover sheet indicating the student's name and course
- Length of journal responses for each question: 300-500 words
- Each journal response should be labeled with the specific question being answered
- Students may NOT cut and paste information or answers from an internet source or copy information or answers from any source other than the literary works

Questions: Respond to each question for the text specified

1. *Things Fall Apart*

Historical and Cultural Context/Setting: What moral struggle, both external and internal, dominates the protagonist's experiences in the novel? How does this struggle influence his thoughts and behavior? His decisions? How does the protagonist resolve his moral struggle? Why does he choose this path?

2. *Man's Search For Meaning*

Theme: What overall ideas does the author convey about the human condition? In other words, what commentary do you think the author makes about universal human experiences? Provide specific examples from the text to support your response.

3. "Dover Beach"

Author's Style: Exam the elements the poet uses to convey his ideas. Consider the poet's use of diction, tone, point of view, syntax, structure, figurative language, and the like. Make sure you explain how the elements help you understand the meaning of the poem.