

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 16**, 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. Journals will be assessed as follows:

- Formative Assessment Grade based on:
 - Thorough, substantial responses that include specific details and references to the books
 - Accuracy of plot and character—correctly identify the actions of the story and the characters involved
 - GUMS: grammar, usage, mechanics, and spelling
 - Following directions
- Summative Assessment Grade during the 1st Quarter as determined by the teacher

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 work should be 300-500 words.
- Each journal response should be labeled with the specific question being answered.

- Students are expected to use their own ideas and demonstrate their understanding of the books by completing this assignment. Therefore, students should NOT consult internet and/or other sources of information about the books in order to avoid plagiarism, which includes but is not limited to:
 - cutting and pasting information or answers from an internet source
 - copying information or answers from any source other than the book itself
 - paraphrasing the ideas of or altering the words of other sources

Questions: Respond to each question for the text specified. All responses should include specific textual evidence.

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 universal human experiences does the author present? What overall idea about who we are as humans does the author convey through these experiences?

3. "Dover Beach"

Author's Style: What commentary about human experience does the poem communicate? Examine the elements the poet uses to convey his ideas. Consider the poet's use of diction, tone, point of view, syntax, structure, and figurative language. Make sure you explain how the elements help you understand the meaning of the poem.