

Pleasant View School
Summer Reading Assignments
2019 - 2020

All incoming 11th and 12th grade students are required to complete this summer reading assignment for English Language Arts at Pleasant View School. Please choose one book from the list. Teachers will assign a literary analysis for the texts when students return to school.

There are different assignments for regular track and AP students. Please see attachments for each assignment.

11th and 12th Grade Regular Track English Language Arts

Memoir: *Color of Water* by James McBride

Alternative memoir: *One Writer's Beginnings* by Eudora Welty

(Note: You are only required to read one of these memoirs. The alternative is provided if you object to any of the content in *Color of Water*.)

The memoir assignment is provided below and is based on the classic college application question that most—if not all—of you will have to address as you complete your college applications. Please understand that everyone is required to complete the summer reading, regardless of when you enter the class.

Requirements for essays are as follows: 1 inch margins, Font size 12, Times New Roman.

In addition to the written assignment, you are expected to be prepared to discuss this text on the first day of class. You won't have time to read this text once classes start; first of all, your assignment will be due early in the school year, and this memoir begs for substantial reading, and second, you'll be given supplemental readings for this text once you start classes. Discussion, as you will see, will determine a significant portion of your grade. Instead of simply saying, "I don't like this," though, we're going to have more in-depth discussions. For each of these texts, note repetition. You're not looking for repeated words such as "it" or "is"; instead, you're looking for repeated symbols, character descriptions, and narrative references.

If you need assistance during the summer or if you want me to read any part of a draft, feel free to email me at jcartwrightalejo@pleasantviewschool.com.

Memoir Assignment: James McBride chronicles his relationship with his mother Ruth, a Jewish woman who married an African American man in 1942, and through this memoir he discovers how his relationship with her impacted the constitution of his identity. Discuss one person in your life who has had a significant impact on developing your identity. In other words, who in your life has helped to make you who you are? (Approximate length: 3 pages)

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11th and 12th Grade AP English

The following list is extensive, but you should find no trouble completing the reading this summer. Budget your time wisely! If you wait until the last week or few days before school starts, you will encounter much frustration. Of course, this will be the pace that we take throughout much of the year.

- *Song of Solomon* by Toni Morrison (Disclaimer: There are occasional instances of profanity in this novel. If you object to reading this novel, please substitute *The Awakening* by Kate Chopin.)
- *Civilization and Its Discontents* by Sigmund Freud
- *As I Lay Dying* by William Faulkner

You will have one analytical essay to write and one creative assignment. You will also be expected to give a seminar presentation for *Civilization and Its Discontents* when we return (Guidelines will be given for this when we return.). Everyone is required to complete the summer reading, regardless of when you enter the class. **Plagiarism on any assignment will result in an automatic 0.** Cliff and Spark and Wikipedia are not going to offer you much assistance for these assignments, so you're going to have to rely on your analytical skills. Requirements for essays are as follows: 1 inch margins, Font size 12, Times New Roman. Avoid first person references. **AVOID PLOT SUMMARY.** Use quotes and evidence from the texts to support your arguments. Avoid "hanging quotes": quotes that are included with no support or individual analysis. Use present tense unless you're referring to actual historical events. Any outside sources used for these papers must be cited using MLA documentation. Any sources that are used in the paper but are not cited will be considered plagiarized.

In addition to the written assignments, you are expected to be prepared to discuss these texts on the first day of class. You won't have time to read these texts once classes start; first of all, your assignments will be due early in the school year, and second, you'll be given supplemental readings for these texts once you start classes. Discussion, as you will see, will determine a significant portion of your grade. Instead of simply saying "I don't like this," though, we're going to have more in-depth discussions. For each of these texts, *note repetition*. You're not looking for repeated words such as "it" or "is"; instead, you're looking for repeated symbols, character descriptions, and narrative references.

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A. Longer essay---Faulkner and Morrison---Length: Three-Five pages. This essay will be due the second week of class. For late papers, I deduct a full letter grade. Choose one of the following topics to address in a clear, well-organized essay. Be sure that you have a clear, well-defined thesis that provides focus to your essay.

- Many critics have often linked Morrison and Faulkner because of their narrative style and character development, even though Faulkner is technically considered a modernist writer and Morrison is considered a postmodernist writer. Using Milkman from *Song of Solomon* and Darl from *As I Lay Dying*, compare and contrast the constitution of both characters' identities. What makes Milkman who he is at the end of the novel? What makes Darl who he is? Is it family history? Or is it their current societies?

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- Examine the endings of both *Milkman* and *Darl*. Does Milkman ultimately become free? Does Darl become free? Use the narrative structure of both novels in your analysis.
- In Faulkner's *As I Lay Dying*, Dewey Dell possesses her own motivation for this journey across Mississippi, even though her naivety can, at times, become exasperating. Morrison's Hagar, while she meets a different end, also pursues a desperate search. Compare Dewey Dell to Hagar, but avoid focusing on the obvious parallels in their lives. Instead, what drives them to pursue their seemingly futile searches? Why does Hagar's journey end so abruptly, while Dewey Dell plays a pivotal role in the denouement?

B. Faux Faulkner parody. This will be due the third week we return. Faulkner's writing is often distinguished from other writers because of his style, his syntax, and his dialect. Every year, the *Hemispheres* magazine used to sponsor a Faux Faulkner contest, in which contestants wrote a short story that imitated Faulkner's style. The subject of the story is up to you---several winners wrote about the White House. The point is to use Faulknerian language and style for your story. The short short story should be at least 250 words and should imitate Faulkner. Feel free to visit the Yoknapatawpha website for ideas.