

Summer Reading Assignment – American Literature Juniors: 2023–2024

Assigned Text:

- *The Lock Artist*, Steve Hamilton

Welcome to American Literature! An important component of the English program at Mission College Prep is the Summer Reading assignment. The three main goals of this assignment are to keep you active in reading, broaden your horizons, and challenge your thinking skills.

The Summer Reading Assignment is a graded assignment; your knowledge of the book's content will be discerned in **three** ways:

- A dialectical journal--to be done in the summer as you read
- A piece of writing--to be done once school begins
- An exam--to be taken once school begins

I. Dialectical Journal

- You will complete a series of journal entries that demonstrate engagement with the text, explore your understanding of the various arguments presented, and provide a sampling of your best critical thinking. Complete a chart like the example below. Please be professional—all information must be typed (12 point, Times New Roman font).
- Create your usual MLA heading and header
- Create a sub-heading with the book title and book author.
- Select 5-7 meaningful passages (the passages can be a sentence or two in a paragraph) that adequately draw from the beginning, middle, and end of the book.
- Write out the entire passage to which you will refer and include the page number from which it came.
- Paraphrase or summarize the passage. It will be helpful to provide the context in which it came. In other words, what is happening before and after this passage appears in the text?
- Analyze and react to the passage in full sentences—not notes. Use what you learned in your sophomore year to use MLA and analyze deeply.

This should NOT just be a personal reaction or summary; rather, you should attempt to analyze the methods that the writer uses to make their argument. This is where you will show your engagement and reflection. Your analysis should be longer than the selected quotation or passage.

Example Dialectical Journal Set-Up

Doe 1

Jordan Doe

Mrs. Ocegüera-Dodge

American Literature

1 August 2021

Book Name: *Animal Farm* **Author:** George Orwell

Quotation from text w/ pg.

1. "Man is the only creature that consumes without producing. He does not give milk, he does not lay eggs, he is too weak to pull the plough, he cannot run fast enough to catch rabbits. Yet he is lord of all the animals. He sets them to work, he gives back to them the bare minimum that will prevent them from starving, and the rest he keeps for himself" (Orwell 7).

2.

3.

4.

5.

Paraphrase or Summary

1. Old Major says this when he speaks to all of the animals on the farm about his dream and the future of the farm. He is teaching them how they labor for the good of someone who does no labor at all by giving examples of all the work the animals do, while giving examples of the harsh treatment they receive. Old Major uses this to convince the animals to rebel and begin working for themselves, not their greedy farmer.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Analyze and React

1. Orwell creates an allegory to the Russian revolution early on, and this quote is a great example. Old Major is speaking about worker's rights and is beginning a rebellion against the oppressor by playing to his audience's physical exhaustion, starvation, and general unhappiness on the farm. While he has an obvious objective - rebellion and self-governance-, Old Major also uses only the facts of their daily lives to create buy-in. While this quote does not even mention any sort of plan to change this, the tone that Orwell creates is such that the reader knows the status-quo is adverse to Old Major's morality.

2.

3.

4.

5.

II. Thematic Essay: Written during the second week of school.

- You will be writing a thematic literary analysis essay on the novels.
- **As you read**, pay attention to the message that the author is putting forth. Remember, all authors write for specific purposes; as critical thinkers, our job is to figure out that purpose.
- We will work on the essay's construction, during class, prior to writing it.

III. Exam

- You will take an exam that will focus on reading comprehension and analysis.
- The exam will not be on the first day of school; however, you should be prepared to discuss the book at length on the first day in order to prepare for your exam.
- The exam will include plot, character, theme, and basic literary devices.