

Advanced Placement Literature and Composition Reading Assignment / 2019

Welcome, Seniors!

I am excited that you have chosen to embark on this challenging but rewarding journey through AP Literature. This course, in many ways, becomes an extension of AP Language in the areas of reading and thinking critically and writing effectively. The main difference between the two is that while AP Language focuses on non-fiction (biographies, autobiographies, essays, etc.), AP Literature focuses on fiction (poetry, dramas, short stories, and novels). However, we will be applying the same types of skills to these genres: analyzing how authors create meaning through literary elements (setting, characterization, point of view, irony, symbolism, conflicts, themes) and through devices (diction, imagery, details, language syntax, figurative language, tone). Thus, you should find it encouraging that if you were successful in AP Language--and by successful I mean you have mastered the basic tools for constructing effective essays (thesis statements, organization, coherence, blending of quotes, control of language) as well as for developing strategies for attacking and analyzing a text, then you will find the transition to AP Literature to be a smooth one. In addition to the skill sets being similar, your commitment to this AP course must also parallel your dedication to other advanced classes. Students who--as reflected in their performance in AP Language or other AP courses this past year-- are not self-disciplined, self-directed, and self-motivated should execute a schedule change immediately. (Please remember that if you fail a course your senior year, you will not graduate. Do not take this course *just to be with your friends*--or you may not be walking across the stage with them in May.) Your senior year will be challenging in ways that other years have not: juggling overloaded schedules, completing college applications and scholarship deadlines, preparing for major life-changes, and experiencing the dreaded "senioritis." If you are wavering in your commitment now, you might carefully consider what is the best option for you, keeping in mind that what we strive for here at Barbers Hill is for each student to be in the course that *best fits* his or her needs at that moment in time. If, however, upon reflection, you feel confident that you have demonstrated these qualities this past year AND, you love to read, enjoy analyzing what you read, have intellectual curiosity, and wish to engage in meaningful assignments and dialogue about those assignments, you will find a wonderful place awaiting you in this course. I look forward to getting to know each of you and anticipate a rewarding and successful year with the Class of 2019!

The Novel

Her parents are dead. The aunt with whom she resides is cruel, her cousins, antagonistic and insufferable. But what options does a young girl have in Victorian England? Does she stay where she is and possibly die--if not physically, certainly emotionally? Does she risk leaving the only home she knows in search of a new life--in search of a new identity? Come along this summer as we meet Jane Eyre and see a bit of her spirit in every one of us: a person on a quest to find a place she truly belongs, to discover a way she can make a positive contribution to the world, and to find people who will truly love her for who she is. And . . . come along for a few unexpected twists and turns. Jane Eyre, by Charlotte Bronte, is partly romance--but, don't worry, guys, it's also a gothic story, a mystery tale, and social commentary all poured into one novel.

The Assignment

Read *Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Bronte, *only* Chapters 1-20. I suggest you purchase your own copy. You will find that annotating in the text is the best way to read, remember, and study. This novel is a great one to use on the AP exam in May; therefore, reviewing an annotated copy before the test can be invaluable. Chapters 1-20 are the only chapters that you will be responsible for knowing. We will test over these chapters on Thursday, August 23 (a test grade), analyze them, write about them, and then continue reading the novel into the first six weeks. Several other grades for this first six weeks will be centered on this text; thus, it is imperative that you read it closely. *(If you know you will be busy when school starts--and who is not with football, band, drill, etc.--then you might wish to read the entire novel this summer, leaving you only to review the text once school starts.)*

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