

AP Literature and Composition Summer Reading Assignment

Students must complete all three tasks for the summer reading assignment. Directions for each task are listed below each subheading.

Task A: Novel Selection

Choose a novel from the attached “Most Frequently Cited” list. (You may not choose a novel from previous English courses.)

Task B: Purpose Statements

Provide 10 purpose statements that help to illustrate/highlight the main elements of the story. These statements must be derived from a variety* of areas and represent the entire text, not just one or two chapters. For every purpose statement, provide properly cited textual evidence that captures what is detailed in the statement you have created. *When citing a drama, make sure to document the act with an upper-case Roman numeral, the scene with a lowercase Roman numeral, and the line number(s). If you are relying on text that is more than one line, you will want to add “/” at the line breaks. See the example below:

Purpose Statement:

1. Shakespeare presents Tybalt’s outrage during the Capulet party in order to display his aggressively violent, yet loyal nature.

Evidence:

1. “Fetch me my rapier, boy. What dares the slave/Come hither, cover’d with an antic face,/To fleer and scorn at our solemnity?/Now, by the stock and honour of my kin,/To strike him dead, I hold it not a sin” (I.v. 55-59). “He is a Montague, our foe” (I.v.61). “It fits, when such a villain is a guest:/I’ll not endure him” (I.v.77).

Templates and Notes on Purpose Statements:

Purpose Statements (See attached section Templates and Notes on Purpose Statements for clarification)

A purpose statement is a definitive statement that directly identifies the purpose* of a particular moment, scene, action, line of text, etc. in a work of literature. It functions similarly to a thesis statement/topic sentence in that it presents both a what and a why.

*Purpose: What the reader is supposed to understand after experiencing the selected text (immediate or holistic— one section or the entire book).

Example: Romeo and Juliet Purpose Statement Template

Shakespeare presents (summary of major literary event—potentially including a literary term) in order to (answer what you understand about characters/plot/ universal insights (thematic observations)) based on the summarized element— potentially including a literary term).

“Textual Evidence Relating to Your Purpose Statement” (Act. Scene. Line numbers).

*Your quotes must be different from the ones that are on Sparknotes; if you share any, you will not receive credit. Quotes must be cited in MLA format. They must also come from various areas of the text: beginning, middle, and end. You must cite each quote using proper MLA in-text citation. (Act, Scene, Line number), e.g. (V.ii.21-26).

Task C: Summer Movie Assignment

Summer Movie Assignment (2.5 Pages Maximum Length)

Write a well-developed essay responding to the following prompt, but rather than using a “novel, play, or epic,” you must use a Disney or Pixar film of your choice. So, watch the film carefully and answer the question completely.

Provide a prompt from FRQ3 AP Lit Exam.

Example taken from 2022 FRQ3 Prompt.

Many works of literature feature characters who accept or reject a hierarchical structure. This hierarchy may be social, economic, political, or familial, or it may apply to some other kind of structure. Either from your own reading or from the list below, choose a work of fiction in which a character responds to a hierarchy in some significant way. Then, in a well-written essay, analyze how that character’s response to the hierarchy contributes to an interpretation of the work as a whole.

Most Frequently Cited 1970 – 2025

- 34 citations: *Invisible Man* by Ralph Ellison
- 29 citations: *Wuthering Heights* by Emily Bronte; *Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Bronte;
- 26 citations: *Great Expectations* by Charles Dickens;
- 20 citations: *Crime and Punishment* by Fyodor Dostoevsky;
- 19 citations: *Heart of Darkness* by Joseph Conrad; *Their Eyes Were Watching God* by Zora Neale Hurston
- 18 citations: *The Awakening* by Kate Chopin; *Beloved* by Toni Morrison; *Moby Dick* by Herman Melville; *The Scarlet Letter* by Nathaniel Hawthorne;
- 16 citations: *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* by Mark Twain; *Catch-22* by Joseph Heller; *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* by James Joyce; *Native Son* by Richard Wright;
- 15 citations: *Ceremony* by Leslie Marmon Silko; *A Raisin in the Sun* by Lorraine Hansberry; *Song of Solomon* by Toni Morrison;
- 14 citations: *The Color Purple* by Alice Walker; *Antigone* by Sophocles; *Death of a Salesman* by Arthur Miller; *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald;
- 13 citations: *Light in August* by William Faulkner; *Othello* by William Shakespeare; *The Color Purple* by Alice Walker;
- 12 citations: *Billy Budd* by Herman Melville; *The Crucible* by Arthur Miller; *Portrait of a Lady* by Henry James; *As I Lay Dying* by William Faulkner; *The Glass Menagerie* by Tennessee Williams;
- 11 citations: *Candide* by Voltaire; *A Streetcar Named Desire* by Tennessee Williams; *Waiting for Godot* by Samuel Beckett; *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen; *Sula* by Toni Morrison;
- 10 citations: *A Passage to India* by E.M. Forster; *The Tempest* by William Shakespeare; *Anna Karenina* by Leo Tolstoy; *Madame Bovary* by Gustave Flaubert; *Mayor of Casterbridge* by Thomas Hardy;
- 9 citations: *Jude the Obscure* by Thomas Hardy; *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* by Tom Stoppard; *Things Fall Apart* by Chinua Achebe; *Brave New World* by Aldous Huxley; *The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini; *The Sound and the Fury* by

William Faulkner; *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* by Thomas Hardy; *The Women of Brewster Place* by Gloria Naylor;

- 8 citations: *All the Pretty Horses* by Cormac McCarthy; *Bless Me, Ultima* by Rudolfo Anaya; *The Grapes of Wrath* by John Steinbeck; *The Jungle* by Upton Sinclair; *Moll Flanders* by Daniel Defoe; *Oedipus Rex* by Sophocles; *The Sun Also Rises* by Ernest Hemingway; *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* By Edward Albee; *A Doll's House* by Henrik Ibsen; *Fences* by August Wilson; *Mrs. Dalloway* by Virginia Woolf; *Twelfth Night* by William Shakespeare;
- 7 citations: *All the King's Men* by Robert Penn Warren; *Cry, The Beloved Country* by Alan Paton; *Ethan Frome* by Edith Wharton; *Gulliver's Travels* by Jonathan Swift; *Lord Jim* by Joseph Conrad; *Medea* by Euripides; *The Merchant of Venice* by William Shakespeare; *The Piano Lesson* by August Wilson; *Don Quixote* by Miguel de Cervantes; *The Namesake* by Jhumpa Lahiri; *Obasan* by Joy Kogawa;
- 6 citations: *The Bluest Eye* by Toni Morrison; *An Enemy of the People* by Henrik Ibsen; *Equus* by Peter Shaffer; *Hedda Gabler* by Henrik Ibsen; *The House of Mirth* by Edith Wharton; *Major Barbara* by George Bernard Shaw; *Murder in the Cathedral* by T.S. Eliot; *The Odyssey* by Homer; *The Poisonwood Bible* by Barbara Kingsolver; *Sister Carrie* by Theodore Dreiser; *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee; *The Turn of the Screw* by Henry James; *The Handmaid's Tale* by Margaret Atwood; *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* by Ken Kesey; *To the Lighthouse* by Virginia Woolf;
- 5 citations: *Age of Innocence* by Edith Warton; *Atonement* by Ian McEwan; *Bleak House* by Charles Dickens; *The Catcher in the Rye* by J.D. Salinger; *The Cherry Orchard* by Anton Chekhov; *Doctor Faustus* by Christopher Marlowe; *Go Tell It on the Mountain* by James Baldwin; *Jasmine* by Bharati Mukherjee; *Middlemarch* by George Eliot; *The Mill on the Floss* by George Eliot; *Mrs. Warren's Profession* by George Bernard Shaw; *My Antonia* by Willa Cather; *1984* by George Orwell; *Never Let Me Go* by Kazuo Ishiguro; *Tom Jones* by Henry Fielding; *Wide Sargasso Sea* by Jenn Rhys; *Wise Blood* by Flannery O'Connor; *The Importance of Being Earnest* by Oscar Wilde; *The Joy Luck Club* by Amy Tan; *Passing* by Nella Larsen; *The Remains of the Day* by Kazuo Ishiguro;

Works Cited

Effinger, Sandra. "MsEffie's List of Titles from Open Response Questions for Advanced Placement® English Literature Exams, 1970-2023." *AP English Titles from the Open Question*, 15 April 2026, mseffie.com/AP/AP_Titles.html.

Madeira City Schools. "AP Summer Reading List [1]." *Most frequently cited books in AP lit exam 1970 – 2014*, <https://www.madeiracityschools.org/userfiles/300/classes/39310/most%20frequently%20cited%20books.pdf>.