AP Literature

Dr. Slaven

Summer Reading Assignment

A Note from Dr. Slaven!

Greetings!

I'm not sure I have the words, even after careful reflection, to express how excited I am to be embarking on the AP Literature journey with you. We will work hard, but we will also get to unearth some of the most soul-wrenching and thought-provoking parts of literature that expose not just how humans live but what we live *for*. No small task. I will be here for you every step of the way, and that includes this summer. I've given my contact information below. Sometimes I'll respond right away if I'm in a position to do so; other times it might take me 24 hours, but rest assured, I'll get back to you.

I've chosen the assignments you'll be completing this summer intentionally with a few purposes in mind. They focus on skills that will be universally significant throughout the year and across disciplines while introducing you to some of the genres of writing we'll be exploring in our time together. The authors you'll read all wrote in different time periods, but were all successful in conveying something about the human condition through the use of literature.

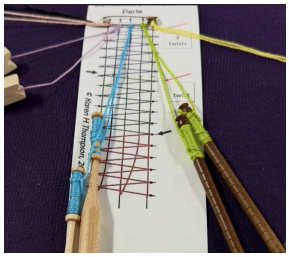
All of that being said, I must remind you that this is a course that rewards consistent practice and willingness to grow skills. There is no clear memorization element to being successful in the AP Lit course. Instead, students who are skillful in their execution of literary analysis will find the most luck in passing the exam.



I'm a BIG animal lover! Here are a few of the critters who are under my care. There are too many chickens to name and then there's Astrid and the bees!









I am also into fiber arts! I enjoy spinning my own yarn, weaving, crochet, knitting, and I am learning to make lace.



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How to Complete this Assignment[1]

This packet is a companion to your reading of the texts over the summer. For each text, you'll find a background page with some helpful information about the author, the text itself, and relevant historical tidbits. There will also be an annotation guide that gives you some ideas for literary elements, symbols, and topics to be on the lookout for. Following this page, each text will have a set of journals. These will act as your first AP Lit grade for the Fall.

PRO-TIPS

- Pre-read journals before reading text. This will focus your reading and annotation even more.
- Keep in mind some common topic threads throughout all texts:
  - Nature
  - Social pressure
  - Construction of self-identity
  - Gender roles

How to Get Help

If you need help at any time while working on this resource, or have any questions, you can contact:
Dr. Slaven – (901)290-8112 (text)
Email: slavena@scsk12.org
Keep in mind that you may experience more than 24 hour delays in response to your communication.

What to Turn In

ONE COMPOSITION NOTEBOOK!

You should submit your WHOLE NOTEBOOK by Tuesday, August 4th (the second day of school). I will be looking for the following pages, in this order:

- Part 2: Art
  - Notes on a work of art.
- Part 3: Novel
  - Notes about your relationship with reading.
  - Unfamiliar words list
  - Notes about Chopin
  - Notes about Romanticism
  - THREE pages of journal entries
  - Notes about Jean Rhys
  - Notes about Postcolonial Literature
  - THREE pages of journal entries
- Part 4: Poetry
  - Poem 1 Analysis
  - Poem 2 Analysis

[1] Assignment adapted from "Summer Reading Assignments" by Susan Barber and Brian Sztabnik.2022. https://muchadoaboutteaching.com/summer-reading-in-ap-lit/

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Part 1: Organizing

Step 1: Watch the following two videos

How I Take Notes	10 Note-Taking Tips

Step 2: Obtain Composition Notebook



Get a composition notebook with the style of paper that you prefer (lined, graph, blank, bullet point, etc.). We will use this notebook to create notes for the major works that we study. NUMBER EACH PAGE IN YOUR NOTEBOOK. Put the number in the bottom right corner.

Why it is important -- The process of learning something often starts out feeling disorganized and unwieldy; the most important aspects are not always salient. Consolidation helps organize and solidify learning. This notebook will serve as a means to consolidate what you have learned throughout the year, allowing you to retrieve the significant progress we make. Make it your own. Decorate it if you like or keep it clean and clear.

Part 2: Art

Step 1: Watch the following video

Evan Puschak has his own YouTube channel (NerdWriter) in which he offers video essays. He is thoughtful, well-researched, and has a keen sense of timing and audience awareness. In this video essay he analyzes one of the iconic 20th century American paintings, "Nighthawks." Pay attention to not only what he sees, but also notice the biographical and historical context he weaves into his analysis. I admire how he uses both images and words to teach you about the painting.

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Step 2: Notes

For your first set of notes, I want you to write two pages. Choose a work of art that has meaning to you. It can be a work of literature. It can be a painting. It can be a song. It can be any creative endeavor that has some fascinating artistry. I want you to analyze that work of art on a similar level to Evan Puschak (the Nerdwriter). If you look at his show notes on the YouTube page for the "Nighthawks" video essay, he has done a fair amount of research. I want you to do the same. In your notes, find an organized way to explain its artistic merit and value. Don't just provide a summary of what it is, analyze how it operates and why it is important.

Why it is important -- I want you to use your notes to enrich your personal language, background knowledge, and vocabulary. For that to happen, these notes should be so much more sophisticated than a summary. They should reveal the complexity of the work of art. You have to articulate not only what it means to you, you should also have a broader appreciation for the artist, the cultural and historical context in which it was created, and how the work has transcended time and remains relevant.

Part 3: Novel

📌Step 1: Read Leo Babauta's Why I Read (+ a Dozen Book Recommendations)

Write a page of notes about your relationship with reading. Share an honest assessment of the role that it plays in your life. Think about how you would conceptualize and categorize the impact reading has had on you. I value honesty over flattery. If reading is not your thing, say it. If you love it, then let me know. I don't care so much which side you take. More important than what you choose is the truth of your reflection. I want to read about why you feel the way that you do. I want to get to know you as a reader.

Why it is important -- This is the first step in me getting to know you as a reader. What's more important than that?

📌Step 2: Build Context

Take 2-3 pages of notes about Chopin and Romanticism as a literary movement. Use the texts below as a starting point, but feel free to engage in independent research on both topics.

Kate Chopin



Kate Chopin (1850 - 1904), born Katherine O'Flaherty in St. Louis, Missouri on February 8, 1850, is considered one of the first feminist authors of the 20th century. She is often credited for introducing the modern feminist literary movement, which seeks to reinterpret literature from the female perspective. In fact, Rhys' *Wide Sargasso Sea* follows in this tradition. Chopin was following a rather conventional path as a housewife until an unfortunate tragedy-- the untimely death of her husband-- altered the course of her life. She became a talented and prolific short story writer.

She is best known for her novel *The Awakening* (1899), whose original title was *A Solitary* Soul. This hauntingly visionary tale follows a woman unfulfilled by the mundane yet highly celebrated "feminine role," and her painful realization that the constraints of her gender blocked her ability to seek a more fulfilling life.

Chopin was greatly influenced by the ideas of the artistic movement known as **Romanticism**, which emphasized the individual, the irrational, the imaginative, the personal, the spontaneous, and the emotional. Among the characteristic attitudes of Romanticism were the following: a deepened appreciation of the beauties of nature; a general celebration of emotion over the intellect; a turning in upon the self and a heightened examination of human personality and its moods; and a new view of the creative spirit as more important than strict formal rules and traditional procedures.

Romanticism



I. What exactly is Romanticism?

a. Romanticism is a genre applied to the arts and literature. While many Romantic works do study the theme of love, the Romantic genre and movement doesn't focus on love in Hallmark terms.

b. Romanticism focused on artistic a philosophical expression in the late 1770s and through the late 1800s.

c. Romanticism sought out to be a revolutionary genre. Its founders and enthusiasts sought to transform not only the literary world through poetry and other literature but the world's view itself.

II. Important Themes of Romanticism

a. Imagination
   i. It is a dynamic, active power with many functions. Romantics defined imagination as the ultimate shaping power in one's life.
   ii. Romanticists believed it also helps the humans constitute reality by not only perceiving the difference between imagination and reality, but also they believed that through imagination, one helps to create the reality in the world.
   iii. This theme unites both reason and emotion.

b. Nature
   i. Nature was viewed as organic rather than the focus of scientific and rationalist law.
   ii. This theme correlated to imagination and was presented often as a work of art.
   iii. This theme explored the simplicity of nature.

c. Emphasis on Emotion and the Self
   i. This theme exhibited a greater influence on intuition, instincts, and feelings. Romantics generally paid more attention to emotion over logic.
   ii. This theme also paid close attention to the self and one's individual, internal journey of human development.

d. Individualism: The Romantic Hero
   i. Romantics preferred boldness in characters especially in the protagonists to the past desire for restraint and propriety.
   ii. There was often rejection of absolute systems, whether religious or philosophical. Romantics favored the idea that each person should determine his or her own set of beliefs and create a system to live by.

e. Exotic Elements
   i. Romantics were fascinated with the "unknown" and "mysterious" such as the supernatural.
   ii. Exotic elements explored differences in culture, race, and societal beliefs.

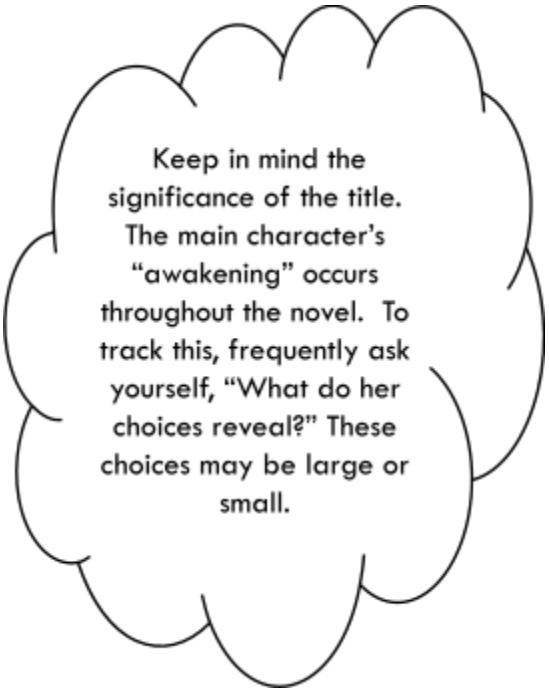
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📌Step 3: Read *The Awakening* by Kate Chopin

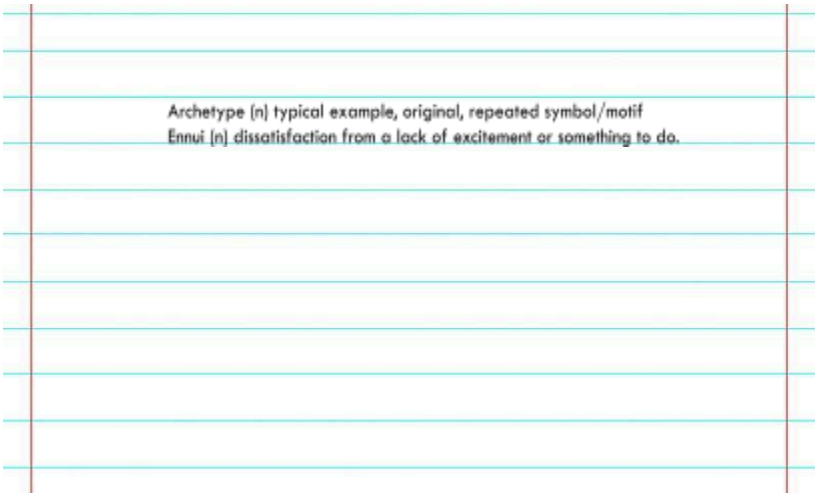
As you read the novel, use the guide below to annotate the text. These are bigger topics/ideas that are more central to the text, but feel free to annotate for other ideas or interests! Make connections to other texts or topics!

Annotation Guide For Reading the Novel

- **Literary Elements**
  - Neutral narrator describing 'normal' life
    - Purpose and connections to larger themes
- **Symbols**
  - The Sea
  - Specific gender archetypes
    - Mother-woman
    - The Lover
- **Topics**
  - Nature/Civilization
  - Destruction of the self/identity
  - Societal constraints and expectations
    - Social interactions as a performance/game
  - Belonging/Alienation
  - The Unknown
  - Femininity/attitudes toward women
    - Roles of women
  - Nostalgia



In your notebook, use a page to write down unfamiliar words and their meanings!



Complete the following THREE journal entries in your notebook!

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📌Journal #1

After reading through the end of Chapter XI (11), respond to the following prompt in your notebook. Label the page "Chopin Journal #1" (1 page response)

The beginning of the novel takes place in a coastal community, and Edna's relationship with the sea changes alongside her broader development as a character. Describe the sea's symbolic role in Edna's 'awakening' thus far, and how this relationship between Edna and the sea signals that this is a Romantic novel.

Criteria for Success:

- State claim about Edna's character development thus far in the novel
- Support claim with an analysis of the role of the sea in her development
- Elaborate on the more general symbolism of the sea
- Connect this symbolism to common themes within Romantic literature
- Support analysis by citing multiple pieces of evidence from the novel

📌Journal #2

After reading through the end of Chapter XXV (25), respond to the following prompt in your notebook. Label the page "Chopin Journal #2" (1 page response)

Analyze how different characters assert control in different realms. Choose two characters from the box below and compare their methods of control and relative power.

Edna	Robert	Alcee	Leonce

Criteria for Success:

- State claim about how the two characters exert control
- Support claim with an evaluation two individual character's methods of control
- Compare different characters through analysis of similarities and differences in methods of control
- Support analysis by citing multiple pieces of evidence from the novel.

📌Journal #3

After reading through the end of the novel, respond to the following prompt in your notebook. Label the page "Chopin Journal #3" (1 page response)

The original title of the novel was *A Solitary Soul.* Evaluate [2]Chopin's motivation for this original title and her ultimate decision to change it to *The Awakening.*

Criteria for Success:

- State claim about Chopin's purpose for originally titling the novel *A Solitary Soul*
- Support claim with analysis of original title's connection to themes within the text
- Evaluate Chopin's choice to ultimately change the title to *The Awakening*
- Support analysis by citing multiple pieces of evidence from the novel

[2] This means that you should be explaining why you think she changed the title and **whether or not you think it was the right decision.** A rumor in an 1899 St. Louis newspaper review suggests that the publisher changed it.

📌Step 2: Build Context

Take 2-3 pages of notes about Rhyse and Postcolonial as a literary movement. Use the texts below as a starting point, but feel free to engage in independent research on both topics.

Jean Rhys



- original name Ella Gwendolen Rees Williams
- born August 24, 1890, Roseau, Dominica, Windward Islands, West Indies
- died May 14, 1979, Exeter, Devon, England

The daughter of a Welsh doctor and a Creole mother, Rhys lived and was educated in Dominica. She moved to England at the age of sixteen, where she worked unsuccessfully as a chorus girl. In the 1920s, she relocated to Europe, travelling as a Bohemian artist and taking up residence sporadically in Paris. During this period, Rhys lived in near poverty, while familiarizing herself with modern art and literature, and acquiring the alcoholism that would persist throughout the rest of her life. Her experience of a **patriarchal society**[3] **and feelings of alienation** during this period would influence her work as she explored topics of belonging and the tension between security and freedom. Her writing also provides crucial insight on the association between the feminine and insanity, a stereotype that still plagues many women to this day.[4]

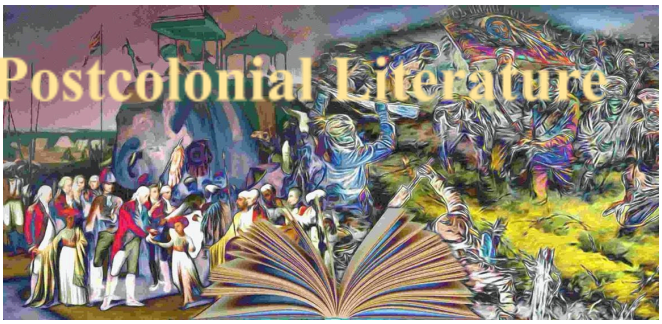
Wide Sargasso Sea (1966) is a response to Charlotte Brontë's classic Victorian novel *Jane Eyre* (1847), which follows a woman who falls in love with a mysterious Mr. Rochester, only to discover that he has been hiding his 'mad' first wife, Bertha, in the house. Jean Rhys reveals the horrifying reality that might lie behind a man's claim that a woman is insane, and humanizes Brontë's grotesque invention, the now heavily symbolic 'madwoman in the attic'. The narrative perspective shifts throughout the novel to take into account both Antoinette and her husband, thus providing the reader with a richly complicated understanding of these characters and their story.

The novel is set shortly after slavery was abolished in the British colonies in the Caribbean. Similar to the United States, this area saw great unrest in the wake of emancipation. Tension between former enslavers and the formerly enslaved often resulted in violence.

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[3] Patriarchy is a social system in which men hold primary power and dominate in roles of political leadership, moral authority, social privilege and control of property.

[4] Many artistic and scholarly works have sought to illuminate the societal tendency to label a woman's behavior as insane when it does not fit within the patriarchal mold of how a woman should behave.



The term 'Postcolonialism' widely refers to the representation of race, ethnicity, culture and human identity in the modern era, mostly after many colonized countries got their independence. It is connected with imperialism from the moment of colonization until 21st century. It describes many interactions between 'colonizer' and 'colonized.' Especially the British Empire consisted of more than a quarter of all the territory on the surface of the earth: one in four people was a subject of Queen Victoria. It is the literature and the art produced in the countries such as India, Sri Lanka, Nigeria, Senegal and Australia after their independence.

The Central Ideas in Postcolonial Literature

Postcolonial has many common motifs and themes like 'cultural dominance,' 'racism,' 'quest for identity,' 'inequality' along with some peculiar presentation styles. Most of the postcolonial writers reflected and demonstrated many thematic concepts which are quite connected with both 'colonizer' and 'colonized'. It was most evident in South Africa that the apartheid was incorporated in national laws. Both the writers Nadine Gordimer and Coetzee in their fiction showed how apartheid destroyed South Africa in many ways as emotionally, morally and economically. In postcolonial context, language played crucial role in control and subjugation of colonized people. Colonizers often imposed their language upon their subjects in order to control them. So most postcolonial writers address the issues in many ways by mixing the local language with imposed language, the result is a hybrid one that underscores the broken nature of the colonized mind.

Conclusion

In fact, as the Postcolonial literature deals with framing identities, the politics of rewriting, translations, relation between nation and nationalism. It is also major literature which helps in understanding both 'colonizer' and 'colonized' in many concerns like education, politics, geography, culture and customs.

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📌Step 4: Read *Wide Sargasso Sea* by Jean Rhys

As you read the novel, use the guide below to annotate the text. These are bigger topics/ideas that are more central to the text, but feel free to annotate for other ideas or interests! Make connections to other texts or topics!

- **Literary Elements**
  - Characterization
  - Descriptions of setting
  - Characters' relationship/attitude toward setting
  - Shifts in narrative perspective
    - Even within same perspective, look for shifts in style that indicate mental state

- **Symbols**
  - Laughter
  - Nature

- **Topics**
  - Nature/Civilization
  - Destruction of the self/identity
  - Societal constraints and expectations
  - Belonging/Alienation
  - Security/Freedom
  - Femininity/attitudes toward women
  - Madness/Insanity
  - Nostalgia
  - Cultural dominance
  - Racism
  - Inequality

Don't forget to add to your list of unfamiliar words! Challenge yourself to define each word!

<u>Complete the following THREE journal entries in your notebook!</u>

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📌Journal 1 - After Completing Part 1 (1 page response)

Label the page "Rhys Journal #1"

Through Antoinette's perception of her setting, Rhys explores several topics that develop into themes in the text. Describe Antoinette's relationship with her setting and how Rhys uses Antoinette's perspective to explore topics such as freedom and alienation.

Criteria for Success:

- State claim about how Antoinette's perception of the setting explores a topic
- Support the claim with detailed description of Antoinette's perception of her setting
- Elaborate on how this perception illuminate deeper themes in the text
- Support analysis by citing multiple pieces of evidence from the novel

📌Journal 2 - After Completing Part 2 (1 page response)

Label the page "Rhys Journal #2"

Antoinette's reaction to alienation is often revealed through her perception of the setting. Relationship with one's setting is a topic that is often explored in postcolonial literature. **Compare** the husband's perception of the setting to Antoinette's and consider what this reveals about his response to alienation.

Criteria for Success:

- State claim about what is revealed about the husband through his perception of the setting
- Describe details of both Antoinette's and the husband's perception of the setting
- Explain how the similarities and/or differences between these perceptions illustrate that this novel is postcolonial in nature
- Elaborate on how the husband's perception of his setting develops a theme within the text
- Support analysis by citing multiple pieces of evidence from the novel

📌Journal 3 - After Completing the Novel (1 page response)

Label the page "Rhys Journal #3"

Thematic: Does the ending suggest justice for Antoinette?

Criteria for Success:

- State claim about whether or not the ending of the novel could illustrate justice for Antoinette
- Support claim with an analysis of the ending, extending beyond a summary
- Address potential counterclaims or alternate interpretations of the ending
- Elaborate on how the ending of the story contributes to a theme of the novel
- Support analysis by citing multiple pieces of evidence from the ending of the novel

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Part 4: Poetry

The Poetry Foundation features a poem each day from a diverse list of present and past poems. Choose **two poems** from any dates over the summer and create notes for each. The notes should focus on an analysis of each poem. Look for parts that are interrelated. Find the individual aspects of the poem that give it meaning.

Poetry Foundation	**Poetry Analysis with Sample Analysis**	**Example of an Analysis of a Poem**

Why it is important -- Thoughtful readers write to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately by selecting apt and specific evidence, organizing the evidence into broader ideas, and conveying the impact of its meaning.