Summer Reading Assignment – Research Paper Preparatory Reading

Welcome to CP American Literature! To prepare for next year's course, your Summer Reading will double as an introduction to American Literature **and** a bit of preparation for your junior year Research Paper. You will choose from an approved book list of American Literature titles (see list at the end of this packet), and the **book you read will become the focus text for your junior year research paper.**

Ms. Heuckroth will be sharing a **Microsoft Form** where you will rank your preferred book titles that you would be interested in reading over the summer and researching during the school year. Before you leave for the summer, Ms. Chirico will finalize everyone's book choices to ensure that there are not too many duplicates. **You must complete the survey sent out in your current English class pages by this Thursday, 5/21.** Do not simply pick the same title as your friend as each student must research and develop her own unique thesis statement for the research paper next year. Select book options that appeal to **you** based on the brief synopsis and research you do into the book's content and style. **You will be given your book title on the day you take your final exam.**

Over the summer, you will have **TWO** assignments that will support your reading experience:

1. Read & Annotate your book
2. Complete a Dialectical Journal/Reading Log Chart

1. Reading & Annotations

The expectation of summer reading is to take the assignment seriously and complete it to the best of your ability. Plan to annotate as you read (that means it is not meant to be a fast read but it is still meant to be enjoyed!). You are involving yourself in the reading process and taking notes as you go. Keep in mind that the end goal is to make the research paper process smoother and generally easier on yourself once we get back to school. Writing down your thoughts and observations while reading will help you remember what you were thinking when it comes time to begin your research.

Your book can be purchased in either used or new condition, as long as it is not already written in. Annotations include underlining, looking up words, and summarizing key quotes and/or passages within pages. They also include taking note of emerging themes or literary devices you spot. Just mark key things in your book, as you are training yourself to look for the most important or interesting pieces of a story.

2. Dialectical Journal/Reading Log Chart

The Dialectical Journal/Reading Log Chart must have **your name** and the **title/author of your book** at the top of the page. The Journal itself should have **8 total entries** (divided into equal sections of your book). Across these eight entries, you will be selecting **16 – 20 relevant quotations** total to analyze.

A dialectical journal is a conversation between you and what you are reading. It highlights the questions, connections, and ideas that you have as you read. This process is an important way to understand a piece of literature. By writing about literature, you make your own meaning of the work in order to truly understand it. When you do this yourself, then the text belongs to you! You make it yours. The book is there for everyone to read; however, the connections and interpretations are uniquely yours. You are neither right nor wrong in your response, so be willing to take risks, try your ideas, and be honest. I want to see **your thoughts**.

Since the journal is a conversation between you and the text, you'll need to record parts of the text and your thoughts about the text. In one column of your dialectical journal you will record phrases, sentences, or short passages that interest you. In the next column, you will write your thoughts about the quoted text. Try to use literary terms in your reflections when appropriate and elaborate as you express your thoughts!

Aim for a mix of comments about:

- what you think something means (interpretation)
- the personal connections you make (to a character, setting, event)
- patterns you notice (symbols, motifs, repetition, style)
- predictions you can pose
- commentary on important decisions made by characters, ideas expressed, or key events
- observations about a character
- what seems unusual or sparks your curiosity
- recognition of a literary technique and ideas about its meaning and purpose

How to Set Up Your Dialectical Journal/Reading Log:

- Use a 4-column table:
    - Column 1: entry #
    - Column 2: date/pages completed/time reading
    - Column 3: novel passage/quote
    - Column 4: commentary

- As you read, choose passages that stand out to you and record them in the "novel passage/quote" column of the chart (ALWAYS include page numbers).

- In the last column, write your response to the text (ideas/insights, questions, reflections, and comments on each passage).

- You must label your responses using the following codes:
    - (Q) Question – ask about something in the passage that is unclear
    - (C) Connect – make a connection to your life, the world, or another text
    - (P) Predict – anticipate what will occur based on what's in the passage
    - (CL) Clarify – answer earlier questions or confirm/negate a prediction
    - (R) Reflect – think deeply about what the passage means in a broad sense –not just to the characters in the story/author of the book. What conclusions can you draw about the world, about human nature, or just the way things work?
    - (E) Evaluate - make a judgment about what the author is trying to say

Some sentence leads could include:

Why did …
Who is …
This setting reminds me of…
This doesn't make sense because …
This character reminds me of... because …
If I were (character), at this point, I would …
What would happen if …
Now, I understand …
This idea/event seems to be important because …
The language makes me feel the author is …
When the author does … , it creates a … tone that …
The details create / show …
The … is compared to a … and it really makes me see how …
The …symbolizes … and it … (the effect)
With the … , the author creates an image of … that …
This moment makes me think of ...
This passage seems to be developing a theme of ... because ...
This reminds me of ... [insert other book, movie, song, etc.] because ...

Sample of the Dialectical Journal/Reading Log Chart:

Name: YOUR NAME
Book Title: *Title* by Author

Item #	Reading Log (Date, Pages, Time)	Passage/ Quote & page #	Commentary
1	6/7/25 Pages: 1 – 45 Time: 9:30 – 12:00	• [Chapter #], [“Quote” (citation).]	C: The setting is important because…
2	6/15/25 Pages: 46 – 62 Time: 10:15 – 11:00	• [Chapter #], [“Quote 1” (citation).] • [Chapter #], [“Quote 2” (citation).]	R: I think this is significant to his/her character development because… P: Because of the language in this passage, I predict that…
3	6/23/25 Pages: 63 – 90 Time: 3:00 – 4:15	• [Chapter #], [“Quote” (citation).]	C: The language here reminds me of…

Grading: Entries will be evaluated on details, thoughtfulness, and variety in the type of entry. You must have **at least eight** entries in your dialectical journal and should have **16 – 20 relevant quotations** total across your entries.

Basic Responses- these are for just the minimum grade (think "B" or "C")

- Raise questions about the beliefs and values implied in the text
- Give your personal reactions to the passage
- Discuss the words, ideas, or actions of the author or character(s)
- Tell what it reminds you of from your own experiences
- Write about what it makes you think or feel
- Agree or disagree with a character or the author

Higher Level Responses- doing any of these will get you more points (think "A")

- Analyze the text for use of literary devices (tone, structure, style, imagery)
- Make connections between different characters or events in the text
- Make connections to a different text (or film, song, etc…)
- Discuss the words, ideas, or actions of the author or character(s)
- Consider an event or description from the perspective of a different character
- Analyze a passage and its relationship to the story as a whole

	4 – Exceeds Expectations	3 – Meets Expectations	2- Partially Meets Expectations	1-Does Not Meet Expectations
Quality of Responses	All entries demonstrate deep insight into the novel and do an exceptional job of explaining the student's thoughts thorough the skillful selection of textual evidence and thoughtful analysis.	Most entries demonstrate sufficient insight into the novel and adequately explain the student's thoughts through the selection of textual evidence and analysis.	Some entries demonstrate a lack of insight into the novel and do not adequately explain the student's thoughts.	No evidence of insights beyond simply identifying or restating the speaker and/or circumstances o the passages or quotes.
Quantity of Responses	Includes 16-20 relevant quotations or passages accompanied by high-level student responses.	Includes 16-20 relevant quotations or passages accompanied by mostly high-level student responses.	Includes 16 relevant quotations or passages accompanied by some less than high-level student responses.	Does not include minimum of 16 relevant quotations or passages, accompanied by insufficient student responses.
Conventions	Evident control of grammar, spelling, and sentence formation. All entries are grammatically correct.	Sufficient control of grammar, spelling, and sentence formation. Few grammatical errors.	Limited control of grammar, spelling, and sentence formation. Confused or inconsistent use of conventions.	Minimal control of grammar, spelling, and sentence formation.
Format	All passages/quotes are copied carefully, are placed in quotation marks, and are followed by the page numbers.	Most passages/quotes are copied carefully, (some may contain minor errors), are placed in quotation marks, and are followed by the page numbers.	Many passages/quotes are copied but may contain errors, lack quotation marks, and/or may be missing page numbers.	Passages/quotes often contain obvious errors, and are missing quotation marks and/or page numbers.

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Organization of work for submission:

• Put your name on the first page or have a header on all pages.
• Use a file name that is clearly labeled, such as: YOUR INITIALS and the assignment (example: CC Summer Reading)
• Remember that your assignment must be submitted through Canvas when we return to school.
• Bring your annotated novel to class.

Due Dates and Summer Reading Quiz:

- All Summer Reading Work (annotations, Dialectical Journal/Reading Log Chart) must be completed by **THURSDAY, 8/27/26**. The first day of school is Wednesday, 8/26, so your summer work is due the following day.

- On one of the first day of class, you will write an essay to serve as the standard "Summer Reading Quiz." If you read and did the above assignments, do not worry – you will be fine! To prepare, simply complete the assignments above to the best of your ability. Do NOT use Sparknotes or other digital sources to complete your Dialectical Journal commentary. Likewise, do not use collaborative group-think: other sources—friends, family, ChatGPT—are NOT FROM YOUR HEAD and words coming from other places may sound like plagiarism and may be treated as such.

Any questions or concerns, feel free to reach out via email, as Ms. Chirico will be periodically checking email throughout the summer.

By Thursday, 5/21, you should rank your top 5 choices AND tell me your last choice pick.
The Microsoft Form can be found in your current English course on Canvas.

Reading Title Options for the Summer Assignment:

- *The Awakening* by Kate Chopin
- *The Age of Innocence* by Edith Wharton
- *The House of Mirth* by Edith Wharton
- *Little Women* by Louisa May Alcott
- *My Antonia* by Willa Cather
- *The Scarlet Letter* by Nathaniel Hawthorne
- *The Color Purple* by Alice Walker
- *Their Eyes Were Watching God* by Zora Neale Hurston
- *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee

- *The Old Man and the Sea* by Ernest Hemingway
- *A Farewell to Arms* by Ernest Hemingway
- *The Sun Also Rises* by Ernest Hemingway
- *Slaughterhouse-Five* by Kurt Vonnegut
- *Ethan Frome* by Edith Wharton
- *Of Mice and Men* by John Steinbeck
- *A Separate Peace* by John Knowles

- *The Glass Menagerie* by Tennessee Williams
- *A Streetcar Named Desire* by Tennessee Williams
- *Death of a Salesman* by Arthur Miller
- *A Raisin in the Sun* by Lorraine Hansberry
- *The Skin of Our Teeth* by Thornton Wilder
- *Our Town* by Thornton Wilder
- *Fences* by August Wilson