Summer 2026 Assignment for Mr. Claro's AP Literature and Composition

Welcome to AP Literature and Composition! I am looking forward to a great year together. Your enrollment in this class implies that you are academically motivated and that you enjoy reading and discussing great works of literature. Nothing will better prepare you for college and this class than reading books – lots of them – and then writing about what you have read. This summer reading and writing assignment will give you a taste of the demands as well as the rewards associated with a class of this caliber. Take caution about saving the reading for the weeks before school starts.

The assignment is designed to help you develop (or maintain) a daily reading habit. It will also allow us to start our year with a common experience. Beyond that, I hope you enjoy reading the books and become intrigued by the ideas they explore.

Please complete the following assignments before the first day of school. Bring your assignments and your books to class on the first day of school. Late assignments will not be accepted for credit.

THE TEXTS:

***How to Read Literature like a Professor* by Thomas Foster**

Foster's book provides insight on how teachers and professors figure out all the meaning stuff about literature. It divides major concepts that will be important to our class (symbol, archetype, allusion, myth) into small, easy-to-digest chapters and relates them to popular movies, television, and literature. Fun and easy to understand, Foster's book will help ease you into the wonderful world of literary analysis. This book should make for interesting reading and prove to be a valuable resource throughout the year.

There may be a test on *How to Read Literature like a Professor* during the first week of school. You should mark key terms and concepts in your book and know them well. If you see connections to novels or plays you have read in previous years, mark those connections in the margins as well.

***Invisible Man* by Ralph Ellison**

Invisible Man is certainly a book about race in America, and sadly enough, few of the problems it chronicles have disappeared even now. But Ellison's first novel transcends such a narrow definition. It's also a book about the human race stumbling down the path to identity, challenged and successful to varying degrees. None of us can ever be sure of the truth beyond ourselves, and possibly not even there. The world is a tricky place, and no one knows this better than the invisible man, who leaves us with these chilling, provocative words: "And it is this which frightens me: Who knows but that, on the lower frequencies, I speak for you?" - Melanie Rehak

***The Metamorphosis* by Franz Kafka**

The Metamorphosis, first published in 1915, is the most famous of Kafka's works. The story begins when a traveling salesman, Gregor Samsa, wakes up to find himself transformed into a giant insect. Curiously, his condition does not arouse surprise in his family, who merely despise it as an impending burden. As with all of Kafka's works, *The Metamorphos*is is open to a wide range of interpretations. Most obvious are themes relating to society's treatment of those who are different, the loneliness of isolation, and the absurdity of the human condition.

THE ASSIGNMENTS:
After you have read the books, complete the following assignments and be ready to turn them in on the first day of class. You will also be able to use assignments #1 and #2 on your essay tests upon return to school.

Assignment #1: Choose three concepts from Foster's book that apply to your interpretation of Kafka's *The Metamorphosis*. Choose three quotes (one for each concept) from Foster's book. Next, choose three quotes from *The Metamorphosis* that exemplify each concept you've addressed by Foster. (see sheet) You should be annotating as you read this text. Take notes in the margins about anything that applies to Foster and to anything that hints at theme(s) in the novella.

Assignment #2: Choose three concepts from Foster's book that apply to your interpretation of Ellison's *Invisible Man*. Choose three quotes (one for each concept) from Foster's book. Next, choose three quotes from *Invisible Man* that exemplify each concept you've addressed by Foster. (see sheet) You should be annotating as you read this text. Take notes in the margins about anything that applies to Foster – particularly symbolism. There are MANY symbols in this work, so keep your eyes open.

Assignment #3: You will receive points for your annotations in both books. I will be checking them the first week of school.

Assignment #4: Pick one and write an essay in 650 words or less. Bring to class on the 1st day.

<u>2025-2026 Common Application Essay Prompts</u>

1. Some students have a background, identity, interest, or talent that is so meaningful they believe their application would be incomplete without it. If this sounds like you, then please share your story.

2. The lessons we take from *obstacles we encounter* can be fundamental to later success. Recount a time when you faced a *challenge, setback, or failure.* How did it affect you, and what did you learn from the experience?

3. Reflect on a time when you *questioned* or challenged a belief or idea. What prompted your *thinking*? What *was the outcome*?

4. Reflect on something that someone has done for you that has made you happy or thankful in a surprising way. How has this gratitude affected or motivated you?

5. Discuss an accomplishment, event, or *realization* that *sparked a period of personal growth and a new understanding of yourself or others.*

6. *Describe a topic, idea, or concept you find so engaging that it makes you lose all track of time. Why does it captivate you? What or who do you turn to when you want to learn more?*

TIPS: Please proofread your work carefully before submitting it. Very few things are as distracting as proofreading mistakes. Please put a heading with your name, the date, the class, and my name in the upper left hand corner. Title your paper. Be thoughtful and creative. Tell YOUR STORY. What about you would convince readers to offer you admittance or a scholarship above thousands of other applicants? ALL WORK MUST BE ORIGINAL.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions about the assignments or the course. I know it's summertime, but that doesn't mean I'm not "on the clock." My email address is nicholas.jfclaro@theindependentschool.com. I look forward to seeing you in August!