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

Welcome to World 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 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:**

***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 Metamorphosis* 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 writing assignments. You will be tested on both novels in the first week of class. And be responsible for annotations. All three assignments are due on the first day of class.

**Assignment #1**: On the sheet provided, explain what you believe to be the main theme of *The Metamorphosis.* What is the overall point of the novella? Use quotes from the text to support your argument (at least three). You should annotate for theme and for quotes that support the theme(s) of novella.

**Assignment #2**: On the sheet provided, explain what you believe to be the main theme of *Invisible Man*. Then, choose three symbols from Ellison's *Invisible Man* and provide quotes with each symbol that contributes to the novel's overall theme. Next, be ready to explain each symbol and how it contributes to that theme. You should annotate for any symbols you find in the novel – underline them and write notes in the margins about what they represent. There are MANY symbols in this novel, 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 prompt and write an effective essay in 650 words or less. Print and bring it to class on the first day.**

**<u>2024-2025 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: Proofread your work. 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. "Essay" is a boring title, you know? 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.

Contact me if you have questions about the assignments or the course. My email address is nicholas.jfclaro@theindependentschool.com. I look forward to seeing you in August!