

Walter Williams High School

June 2020

English IV A.P. Literature – Summer Reading Assignment

When we return to school in August, you should have bought the following three books and completed the assigned summer reading. You will need your copies of these books during the first several weeks of school. The best option is to buy your own; note taking in the margins and underlining are essential for the kind of close reading we will be doing. I will let the local bookstore know that students will be looking for these works; however, don't overlook used bookstores. Greensboro, Raleigh, Chapel Hill, and Durham all have well-stocked used bookstores. Amazon.com, Powells.com, BarnesandNoble.com, ebay.com and thriftbooks.com are all excellent places to pay less for books than you would in a bookstore.

The Magicians – Lev Grossman

(OPTIONAL 1: You may also want to read the first one to three books of the Chronicles of Narnia series to support your understanding of the literary allusions within the novel)

(Optional 2: As texts are often richer upon rereading, I would encourage you to consider also reading A Midsummer Night's Dream over the summer. It is not required, but, as Shakespeare is challenging, it may give you a deeper appreciation of the story once we look at it in class).

Other texts we will be reading this semester:

How to Read Literature Like a Professor – Thomas Foster

A Midsummer Night's Dream – William Shakespeare

Beowulf (Seamus Heaney Edition)

Grendel – John Gardner

Hamlet – William Shakespeare

Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead – Tom Stoppard

Arcadia – Tom Stoppard

The Phantom Tollbooth – Norton Juster

Cloud Atlas – David Mitchell

Write one essay – Pick ONE of the two prompts on the next page (these will be due the second day of class).

- The essay should be *5-8 paragraphs (two pages)* in length, complete with an **introduction, 3-5 body paragraphs** and a **conclusion**.
- **Type each essay** (Times New Roman, 12 pt. font, Double Spaced).
- Respond to the prompt using *The Magicians*.
- **MAKE SURE TO INCLUDE TEXTUAL SUPPORT** (with specific examples from the novel) and **QUOTES** in each body paragraph.
- You should also discuss **literary devices** when asked.
- Link to the rubric for the AP exam essays (this is for free-response essay #3)
<https://apcentral.collegeboard.org/pdf/ap-english-literature-and-composition-frqs-1-2-3-scoring-rubrics.pdf>

(OVER)

Read the following prompt from the 2012 AP Test. Respond to the prompt using *The Magicians*.

2012. “And, after all, our surroundings influence our lives and characters as much as fate, destiny or any supernatural agency.” Pauline Hopkins, *Contending Forces*

Choose a novel or play in which cultural, physical, or geographical surroundings shape psychological or moral traits in a character. Then write a well-organized essay in which you analyze how surroundings affect this character and illuminate the meaning of the work as a whole. You may wish to consider such literary devices as tone, extended metaphor and characterization. Do not merely summarize the plot.

Read the following prompt from the 2007 AP Test

2018 - Morally ambiguous characters – characters whose behavior discourages readers from identifying them as purely evil or purely good – are at the heart of many works of literature. Choose a novel or play in which a morally ambiguous character plays a pivotal role. Then write an essay in which you explain how the character can be viewed as morally ambiguous and why his or her moral ambiguity is significant to the work as a whole. Avoid mere plot summary.

Example thesis statement summer reading essay:

In his/her novel/play/poem, ____ explores (a thematic topic)____; ultimately, s/he argues that _____.

Do not use Cliff's or SparkNotes or any similar publication (in print or on the web) with your summer reading. The entire purpose of the A.P. course is to develop your ability to discern the writer's method. Memorizing or repeating what some graduate student has written for Cliff does not help you develop the skills you will need to be successful in this course and, eventually, on the A.P. test.