

Dear Students,

Your summer assignment is to read and annotate **ONE** of the works listed below. When you return to school in August, bring your novel to class along with your annotations.

World Literature (10th grade)

Ready Player One

The Book Thief

American Literature (11th grade)

In Cold Blood

To Kill a Mockingbird

Raisin in the Sun

British Literature (12th grade)

1984

Pride and Prejudice

The Importance of Being Earnest

As you read your novel, your goal is to look *beyond the plot* for the layers of meaning created by the author through the use of various literary devices. This type of close reading (aka annotating) involves interacting with the text.

Every so often (at least every 3–4 pages), stop and record your observations about different elements you see in the novel (see the list of elements that follows). However, don't simply note the existence of these elements; write a few sentences to elaborate on your observations and connect them to the points the author is making about humanity and life, including psychological, historical, political, and/or social issues.

If you are writing these observations on a separate piece of paper, provide specific examples and quotes (always follow a quote with the page number) to support them.

Whenever you annotate, you should consider the following elements / devices:

- ☐ **Characterization:** A character is a person or animal that takes part in the action of a literary work. As you read, make note of the protagonist, the antagonist and the names and types of other significant characters, and try to analyze how the author creates his/her character(s). Major characters are those who play important roles in a work; minor characters are those who play lesser roles. A complex character is considered a "round" character while a simple character is "flat." A **dynamic character** changes throughout the work, but a **static character** remains the same.
- ☐ **Narrator(s):** the one who tells the story.

Narrative voice / Point of View: the perspective of the narrator.

- (1) First-person point of view is when the narrator is a character in the work and narrates the action as he/she perceives and understands it.
- (2) Third-person point of view is when the events and characters are described by a narrator outside the action.
- (3) Third person omniscient point of view means the narrator is all-knowing, seeing into the minds of more than one character.
- (4) Third-person limited point of view is when the narrator tells the story from the perspective of only one of the characters, so the reader learns only what that character thinks, feels, observes and experiences.

- ☐ **Setting:** Identify the setting, defined as the time and place of the action of a short story, novel, play, narrative poem or nonfiction narrative. Setting may also include the social and moral environment that forms the background for a narrative. It is one of the main elements in fiction and often plays an important role in what happens and why. Note changes in setting, and consider the importance of the setting to plot and development of ideas.
- ☐ **Figurative language:** writing or speech not meant to be interpreted literally. It creates vivid word pictures and makes writing emotionally intense and concentrated (simile, metaphor, hyperbole, personification, apostrophe, symbol, imagery, etc).
- ☐ **Allusion:** a reference to a well-known person, place, event, literary work or work of art. Allusions often come from the Bible, classical Greek and Roman myths, plays by Shakespeare, historical or political events and other materials authors expect their readers to know.
- ☐ **Tone:** – is an expression of a writer's attitude toward a subject. Unlike mood, which is intended to shape the reader's emotional response, tone reflects the feelings of the writer. The writer's choice of words and details helps establish the tone, which might be serious, humorous, sarcastic, playful, ironic, bitter or objective. To identify the tone of a work, you might find it helpful to read the work aloud. The emotions you convey in reading should give you clues to the tone of the work. REMEMBER: **TONE** is set by the author. **MOOD** is the reader's reaction.
- ☐ **Theme:** *a central idea or message* in a work of literature. Theme should not be confused with the subject or what the work is about. Rather, **theme is a perception about life or human nature** shared with the reader. Sometimes the theme is directly stated within a work; at other times it is implied, and the reader must infer the theme. (In *Macbeth*, some themes are the corrupting effect of unbridled ambition, guilt, and the lure of supernatural forces.) To discover theme, consider what happens to the central characters. The importance of those events, stated in terms that apply to all human beings, is the theme. In poetry,

imagery and figurative language also help convey *theme*. (In Chaucer's "The Pardoner's Tale," what happens to the three young men illustrates the theme that "the love of money is the root of all evil.") A "light" work, one written strictly for entertainment, may not have a theme.

Reminders

1. Underline important information, significant passages, and **take notes on this information!** Never just underline or highlight something without including a written note that explains the reason for its significance. These can be done on a separate sheet of paper, in the margins of your personal copy, or on a post-it note.
2. **Questions are part of your notes!** Write them down as you read; they may be answered as you continue to read, but if they aren't you can ask them later in class.
3. Reread sections that you do not understand and **look up unfamiliar words**. Write a synonym in the margin to help you remember the meaning.

More about Literary Elements vs Literary Devices with Examples from Literature:

<https://www.grammarly.com/blog/literary-devices/literary-elements/>

Happy reading!
Mrs. Neighbors