McKinley Technology High School

AP Literature and Composition
Summer Reading/Writing Assignment
2026-2027

Contact: Rachel.Broudy@k12.dc.gov

Welcome to English AP Literature! This class is a college-level Literature course and prepares you for the AP literature exam which you will take next May. We explore a wide variety of novels, poems, short stories, and plays throughout the school year, learning to dive deeply into the meaning of the text and how it is achieved through the author's style.

To prepare for the course, I would like you to read a few chapters from a helpful text called "How to Read Literature Like a Professor" as well as a novel you choose from the list provided in this assignment. You will also compose double entry journals for each book AND compose an in class timed essay for an AP Literature Prompt, during the first weeks of class.

Due Date: August28, 2026 on paper.

Requirements:

Part I (1): Read the Books

- **1. Select one of the choice novels listed on this assignment sheet and read it closely. P**ay special attention to how the author uses literary elements, such as Setting, characterization, imagery, figurative language, tone, to portray the message/meaning of the work. (These are central focal points of the course)
- 2. Read *"How to Read Literature Like a Professor" (E-Text)* by Thomas C. Foster **Chapters 1, 10 and 12**

Part II (2): Double Entry Journals for Choice Novel and select chapters of "How to Read Literature Like a Professor" (50 points)

1. For the novel you chose, take careful, typed notes for each section of the book, including comments and questions in the form of a Double Entry Journal, which is attached to this handout. In your journal, record quotes from the text on the left side of the document and record **your analyses of the quotes you found most meaningful for each part of the book**. There should be at least 15 entries that span the beginning, middle and end of the novel you chose. Choice Novel Double Entry Journal.docx Suggested focal points are:
    a. Complex characterization- analyze how the author characterizes key characters and their complexity/psychology/motivations
    b. Complex attitude (tone)
    c. Meaning of the work as a whole (the larger message the text builds)
    d. Literary techniques and devices that are notable and their effect on meaning
    e. Shifts in characterization and tone and the purpose of the shifts
2. Read the select chapters of "How to Read Literature Like a Professor" and **provide a list of 5 key points for Each chapter using the double entry journal document attached here:** 5. How to Read Literature...Double Entry Journal.docx

3. **Submit your assignments on August 28, 2026, in your Canvas Module**

Part III (3): Literary Analysis Essay for Choice Novel (100 points)

- On the first weeks of school you will have a timed writing assignment on your summer reading novel. Be sure to come prepared, having read your choice novel thoroughly with a focus on characterization, tone and theme (meaning of the work as a whole).

Required texts:

1. *Foster, Thomas C. "How to Read Literature Like a Professor" (E-Text)*

a. ONLY Chapters 1, 10, 12

2. And Choose One of the Following Novels:

a. Choice Novel Synopses:

i. Ray Bradbury's Fahrenheit 541 (E-text) The story of Guy Montag and his transformation from a book-burning fireman to a book-reading rebel. Montag lives in an oppressive society that attempts to eliminate all sources of complexity, contradiction, and confusion to ensure uncomplicated happiness for all its citizens.

ii. Delia Owens' *Where the Crawdad's Sing (E-Text): A* coming-of-age story of a young girl raised by the marshlands of the south in the 1950s. When the town hotshot is found dead, and inexplicably linked to Kya, the Marsh Girl is the prime suspect in his murder case.

iii. Zora Neal Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God (E-text):* A coming-of-age story of Janie Crawford, an African American woman growing up in Eatonville, Florida—one of the first incorporated African American towns in the United States. While assembling her anthology of African American folklore, Janie Crawford tells of her three marriages, her growing self-reliance, and her identity as a black woman.

iv. Yaa Gyasi's *Homegoing (E-text):* A historical novel that traces the descendants of two half-sisters Effia and Esi, born into different villages in Ghana. The sisters' lives follow different paths: Effia marries a wealthy Englishman and lives in Cape Coast Castle, while Esi is captured during a raid and sold into slavery.

v. Jeanette Walls', *The Glass Castle (E-Text):* A memoir of resilience and redemption, and a revelatory look into a family at once deeply dysfunctional and uniquely vibrant. When sober, Jeannette's brilliant and charismatic father captured his children's imagination, teaching them how to embrace life fearlessly. But when he drank, he was dishonest and destructive. Her mother was a free spirit who abhorred the idea of domesticity and didn't want the responsibility of raising a family.

vi. Anthony Doerr's, *All the Light We Cannot See (E-text):* tells the story of two teenagers during World War II (WWII), one a blind girl in Nazi-occupied France, the other a German orphan boy pressed into service by the Nazi army their lives converge, and both try to survive the devastation of World War II relying on one another.

vii. *Khaled Hosseini's, A Thousand Splendid Suns (E-text)*: A Thousand Splendid Suns tells the story of two women who both end

up marrying the same man against their will and the deep friendship that the two of them form as a result of their experiences.

Pick up a copy of the book at the *DC Library*, secure a copy via a local bookstore, or *Amazon*. **I recommend *Amazon*** for used copies. It is **Strongly recommended that you purchase your own copy.**

Journal Scoring Guide

	6 Points	8 Points	10 Points
Purpose CC ELA - RL.3 Analyze the impact of the author's choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story.	The context is missing. Journal entry does not attempt to cite central ideas or events. Supporting details are not mentioned or included in the entry.	Has a topic and attempts a focus, but the focus may not control the writing. Has some context and a clear focus but does not identify the most central ideas in the text. Supporting details are lacking.	Has a compelling opening and/or hook. Includes a proper context and a clear focus. Entry identifies central ideas or events and cites supporting points and details.
Organization CC ELA - W.4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.	Has little organization. No use of transitions. It does not follow journal topic criteria.	The journal attempts a meaningful and robust organization. The student uses transitions when appropriate but may not address all tasks or purposes described in the prompt.	Journal entries are very well organized. Entry uses transitions effectively and follows journal topic criteria.
Voice & Tone CC ELA - W.3d Use precise words and phrases, telling details, and sensory language to convey a vivid picture of the experiences, events, setting, and/or characters.	Language is underdeveloped and immature – may use slang. Journal may contain basic sentence structure.	Some portions of the entry do not contain precise words, details, or mention specific characters, experiences, or events. Language attempts to tell details and/or use sensory details. Some attempts at advanced sentence structure are present.	Journal entries use precise words and phrases, telling details, and sensory language to convey a vivid picture of the experiences, events, setting, and/or characters.
Detail & Elaboration CC ELA - RL.1 Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences are drawn from the text, including	May have random and/or irrelevant details. Details may be listed with no elaboration. Ideas may not be elaborated, or details are insufficient to support focus. Has a few general references to the text. The journal contains less than the required numbers of entries.	Includes information and references to text that support the focus and has some elaboration on the details. The journal contains the required numbers of entries.	Entries include a depth of information that supports the focus and elaborate on textual details. Entries make references to the text and may have some direct quotations that support focus. The journal contains the required numbers of entries.

Conventions CC ELA - L.1 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.	Entries contain many errors of multiple types. These errors interfere with meaning.	Entries may have some grammatical and/or spelling errors, but they do not interfere with meaning.	Entries have few grammatical or spelling errors. Entries demonstrate command of English language conventions.

Total: _____/50

Scoring Guide Summer Literary analysis Essay Scoring Guide

Construct Measured	Score Point 4 ✓ +	Score Point 3 ✓	Score Point 2 ✓ ----	Score Point 1 ✓ ----	Score Point 0 ✓ -----
Writing Written Expression	The student response ● is **effectively** developed with narrative elements and is **consistently appropriate** to the task; ● demonstrates **purposeful** coherence, clarity, and cohesion, making it **easy to follow** the writer's progression of ideas; ● establishes and maintains an **effective** style, attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline.	The student response ● is **most effectively** developed with narrative elements and is **most appropriate** to the task; ● demonstrates coherence, clarity, and coherence, making it **fairly easy** to follow the writer's progression of ideas; ● establishes and maintains the **most effective** style while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline.	The student response ● is developed with **some** narrative elements and is **somewhat appropriate** to the task; ● demonstrates **some** coherence, clarity, and/or cohesion, making the writer's progression of ideas **usually discernible but not obvious**; ● has a somewhat effective style, **generally** attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline.	The student response ● is **minimally** developed with a **few** narrative elements and is **limited in its appropriateness** to the task; ● demonstrates **limited** coherence, clarity, and/or cohesion, making the writer's progression of ideas **somewhat unclear**; ● has a style that has **limited** effectiveness, with **limited** awareness of the norms of the discipline.	The student response ● is **undeveloped** and/or **inappropriate** to the task; ● **lacks** coherence, clarity, and cohesion; ● has an **inappropriate** style, with **little to no** awareness of the norms of the discipline?
Writing Knowledge of Language and Conventions		The student response to the prompt demonstrates **full command** of the conventions of standard English at an appropriate level of complexity. There may be a **few minor errors** in mechanics, grammar, and usage, but the **meaning is clear**.	The student response to the prompt demonstrates **some command** of the conventions of standard English at an appropriate level of complexity. There **may** be errors in mechanics, grammar, and usage that **occasionally impede understanding**, but the **meaning is generally clear**.	The student response to the prompt demonstrates **limited command** of the conventions of standard English at an appropriate level of complexity. There may be errors in mechanics, grammar, and usage that **often impede understanding**.	The student response to the prompt demonstrates **no command** of the conventions of standard English. **Numerous and varied errors** in mechanics, grammar, and usage **impede understanding**.
(DCPS Addition) Writing Sentence Skills	The student effectively writes sentences that **express complete thoughts**, using a **variety** of simple, compound, and complex sentences. Sentences begin in a **variety** of ways.	The student effectively writes sentences that **express complete thoughts**, including **some** compound and complex sentences. **Some variation** at the beginning of sentences is apparent.	The student writes sentences that **express complete thoughts**. **Most** sentences are simple sentences with **similar beginnings**.	The student **mostly** writes sentences that express complete thoughts. **Nearly all** sentences are simple sentences with **similar beginnings**.	The student writes **some** sentences that express complete thoughts. The sentence structure is **poor**.