

**Summer Assignment AP LITERATURE:** Read *How to Read Literature Like a Professor* by Thomas C. Foster + a novel from this list. You will need a composition notebook for your Independent Reading Journal. I suggest you use your composition notebook for this assignment.

**Write a 2-page analysis essay of one of the novels on this list. Apply and cite several of the ideas you learned from reading *How to Read Literature Like a Professor*. Follow MLA guidelines.**

#### **AP Summer Reading List\***

##### **1. *Wuthering Heights* by Emily Bronte**

*Wuthering Heights* is one of the most widely regarded pieces on the AP English Literature reading list. *WH* is a good example of Gothic Romanticism that deals heavily with questions of emotion and violence. It's particularly accessible and discusses class and gender comfortably from the perspective of a woman. This is one of the most frequently cited literary works on the AP Literature exam. It has been included in some form or fashion on 20 different years' tests since 1971.

##### **2. *Great Expectations* by Charles Dickens**

*Great Expectations* is another Victorian novel that is very frequently included on the AP Literature exam. Since 1971, it has been cited 18 times. It is considered a Victorian Bildungsroman, German for "Novel of Formation," simply described as a coming-of-age story.

*Great Expectations* is probably one of the most versatile titles on this list because it addresses many of the Victorian-era genres of the novel, including satire, crime, Silver Fork, Newgate, Gothic, serial fiction, romance, politics, and history. Read Dickens' *Great Expectations* as if you need to mark a trail to get back to the beginning, your starting point. With Dickens, it's about the particular points he mentions. Those points throughout the story inform your reading of *Great Expectations*, not the purpose of the novel itself.

Concentrate on Dickens's beautiful use of language.

##### **3. *King Lear* by William Shakespeare**

*King Lear*, referenced 17 times since 1971, is the most frequently cited work by Shakespeare.

*King Lear* is a brutal play containing themes ranging from familial love and duty to anger and deception. It's a play that provides you with many different elements of story to discuss as well as elements of style. The actual story is too complicated to briefly summarize, so trust the numbers and read this play before taking the test.

##### **4. *Crime and Punishment* by Fyodor Dostoevsky**

The main theme of *Crime and Punishment* is redemption via suffering. This is another long but worthwhile read at 545 pages. The purpose of *Crime and Punishment* is to provide a psychological analysis of the young Raskolnikov's crime to reveal how this psychological analysis itself keeps us imprisoned. Intellectualizing events, says Dostoevsky, keeps us imprisoned.

As the name tells us, Crime and Punishment and their relationship to each other are major themes in the story. Think about questions of sacrifice when reading studying this piece. Nihilism, the superhero complex, alienation, and poverty are also analyzed at length.

#### **5. *Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Bronte**

*Jane Eyre* is a highly cited Victorian Romantic novel. At its core, this is a story of a woman yearning for more than what traditional society would allow her to have. Not only is it well known, it's more relevant today due to the recent push for social equity for women.

#### **6. *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* by Mark Twain**

*Huck Finn* is probably one of the best-known titles on this list among American students and with good reason. It's rich and complex, yet decipherable by students. If, perhaps, you're asked about the era of Slavery or Reconstruction, *Huck Finn* should really come to mind. It relentlessly discusses slavery and racism and the hypocrisy of civilized society. Consider the Mississippi River a symbol for remaining in the middle of the road on issues of race and use that to inform your reading of *Huck Finn*.

#### **7. *Moby Dick* by Herman Melville**

*Moby Dick* is universally accepted as an expansive, masterful work of fiction. However, Melville himself described this novel as a meditation on America. Read key portions of this text at least and gain an understanding of Melville's particular use of symbolism. There are many pertinent symbols that may appear on the AP English Literature exam.

#### **8. *Their Eyes Were Watching God* by Zora Neale Hurston**

Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God* is a good example of a stylistic masterwork, which you can benefit from knowing. Hurston juxtaposes the Southern Black dialect with the voice of a literary narrator. If you're asked about her work, the chances are that an understanding of her style and structure will score you points.

#### **9. *The Sun Also Rises* by Ernest Hemingway**

*The Sun Also Rises* represents the pinnacle, in my opinion, of the Iceberg Theory. That is to say that Hemingway's style of characterization and description, likely considered sparse by most, actually inspired a curiosity in readers that could only have been intentional.

This novel is not only representative of Hemingway's style; it is representative of the Lost Generation in itself, insofar as it chronicles fictionalized stories of American expatriates in Europe.

#### **10. *The Glass Menagerie* by Tennessee Williams**

Williams used much of his own personal experience in writing *The Glass Menagerie*. This is a four-character play with a main theme of accepting reality. Each character in *The Glass Menagerie* retreats into their own world to escape the realities to which they cannot relate. Look for this selection in free response prompts about symbolism. Laura's array of delicate glass animals is the single strongest symbol in the play and a strong symbol in general. This *Glass Menagerie* comes to represent Laura herself and her escape her own illusory world.

**\*Adapted from a list I found online in the Albert Blog**

## EXTRA CREDIT

Create a website to describe the novel you read from the list above or choose another novel of literary merit, read it carefully, and create a website or blog (weebly.com is a great, free source) that does the following:

- ✓ Page One: Relevant Images & a one-paragraph summary of the novel
- ✓ Page Two: Relevant Images & a one-paragraph analysis of a prominent theme developed in the novel
- ✓ Page Three: A relevant musical, artistic, or poetic connection & a one-paragraph explanation of the relationship between your selection and the novel