

Overview

Incoming AICE Language (10th grade) students are required to read two (2) books over the summer in preparation for the course and subsequent AICE exam. One portion of this exam, Passages for Comment, will require that you analyze and evaluate the language use and style of an author. All authors describe through their writing, but if you pay close enough attention, you'd be amazed at the myriad of differences in styles they use. Therefore, while reading your novels, *make sure to pay close attention to how the authors interest you with their diction* (word choice). However, the goal of this summer's reading is not to directly prepare you for your exam, but to initiate you into a conversation about language use in both classic and contemporary fiction.

AICE Language is not preparation for college, it is college. If you are looking for ways around completing your summer reading assignment, you should not enroll in this class. Students who do not complete the summer reading—all of it, as spelled out by these guidelines—will not be eligible to take this course. Online summaries, such as *SparkNotes*, will not be sufficient to complete your summer reading assignment. If you have any questions, write to me at jonathan.hampton@marion.k12.fl.us or see my website for more information: <http://jhampton.pbworks.com>.

Requirements

1. Read "On *Not Reading*" on the back of this page.
2. Choose two (2) novels from the following list.
3. Read the chosen novels.
4. While reading, complete the assignment listed on the back of this page. You will be turning in this assignment during the end of the second week of school.

Titles

The following list of books comprises a conversation that should take place between you, the authors, and their characters. It is *required* that you purchase your books, since you'll be writing in them when we return from break. If bookstore prices are too much, check out the used section at Amazon.com—many of these books cost less than a few dollars to own. Before you commit to a book, make sure you preview the first couple pages to see if you enjoy that author's writing style.

1. *1984* (Orwell) *
2. *Shoeless Joe [Jackson Comes to Iowa]* (Kinsella) *
3. *When Crickets Cry* (Martin)
4. *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* (Haddon)
5. *Alas, Babylon* (Frank) *
6. *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn* (Smith)
7. *To Kill A Mockingbird* (Lee) *

On Not Reading

Before embarking on your novel, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for making the choice to *read* your novel from the first until the very last page. No matter how many times I warn students that *not reading* will cause them to fail this class, every year at least 2-3 students are withdrawn from my course because of choosing to *not read*. These students attempt to use *SparkNotes* (or some other online summary) to help create superficial journal entries, bogus discussion items, and poorly-written essays. Some of those essays are even found to be examples of plagiarism, either in part or in their entirety.

It would seem that many English classes try to make literature a game of right and wrong, whereby you need to “parrot” back answers to receive a good grade. Not “parroting” back these answers and using your own thinking skills seems to give you a lower grade, so you’ve learned it is far better if you don’t read and instead wait for the teacher to tell you the “correct” answer. I’m willing to bet that you can recall a quiz or test from a past English class where you had to recall *who* the characters were, *what* they did in the story, or perhaps *when* a certain event took place. Certainly these types of questions have their place in the classroom, but my question to you is, “So what?” You know *who* the characters are and *what* they did, but is that all that reading is supposed to be?

The answer is no...reading was never meant to be this way! When I read a novel, I’m not interested in *who* did this, or *where* the story takes place. Instead, I’m interested in *how* the story engages, enlightens, instructs, and ultimately transforms me during its reading. It is the ritual of reading that makes the story come alive, time and time again. Unfortunately, the students who choose to *not read* will never know the transformative power of reading; for them, reading is just a game of who did this or that. You, on the other hand, by *reading* are about to begin an incredible journey—one that I hope will be imbued upon your mind for the rest of your life.

Your Assignment

The assignment below will be due during the end of the second week of school. You will not be able to complete this assignment by *not reading*; you must read the books in their entirety.

1. Keep a **reading journal** of your thoughts (on paper) after you finish reading each day.
 - This can be hand-written or typed (double-spaced). It can be in a notebook, or on sheets of paper. For your ease, a notebook would be best.
 - Each entry should be no less than a ½ page (more is required for a higher grade)
 - You should aim for at least 10 entries, although I’m sure more will be required for your book. I still expect at least 10 entries, even if you manage to read your book in one 6-8 hour sitting. Try to stop to record every 30 minutes to 1 hour or so.
 - Quotes (any line from the story) with page numbers are required in each entry; I expect at least 2-3 quotes from your reading for every entry. Look for quotes that seem interesting, though-provoking, confusing, or life-changing. Also make sure to look out for diction (word choice) of the author that seems interesting to you.
 - This journal is a record of *your* thoughts, so think about what interested, intrigued, or confused you while you read. There is no right or wrong answer in your journal, only well-expressed thoughts and opinions.