

Grunin Performing Arts Academy AP Literature and Composition & English 152 Summer Assignment 2026-2027

“After nourishment, shelter and companionship, stories are the thing we need most in the world.”
— Philip Pullman

Welcome to the Advanced Placement Literature and Composition/English 152 program. Your interest in this course indicates you enjoy being academically challenged and learning for learning’s sake. **AP Literature students are required to take the AP Test in May 2027.**

Selected Texts:

1. ***How to Read Literature Like a Professor* by Thomas C. Foster** (genre: nonfiction, educational)
 - ❖ Please note the chapter numbers correspond to the revised 3rd edition (2024; green cover). Read *How to Read Literature like a Professor* by Foster **first and in its entirety**. Students will apply techniques outlined in this work to complete their tests during the first week of school. We will also refer to Foster’s text during the semester.
2. ***Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen** (genre: classic literature, romance, set in England)
3. ***The Reformatory* by Tananarive Due** (genre: horror, historical fiction, set in U.S.)
4. ***Pachinko* by Min Jin Lee** (genre: modern literary fiction, historical fiction, set in Korea and Japan)

Follow the AP Lit/English 152 Instagram account: [@gpaagrantreads](#) for ongoing engagement with the courses during the summer and semester!

Parameters & Instructions:

- ❖ **What to submit?** Summer reading will be assessed in the form of a **test**, rather than an assignment this year; there is no submission. Instead, students are required, as usual, to **read and annotate all 4 texts** during the summer.
- ❖ **During the first week of school, Students will take a test on all 3 novels; Foster’s text is used as an additional source for reading comprehension. Students will be expected to demonstrate analysis of each novel.**
- ❖ Fall semester students will take their tests in Mrs. Grant’s classroom.
- ❖ Spring semester students will be notified on Google Classroom to report to Mrs. Grant’s room during lunch and activity on certain days during the first week of school to take their tests.
- ❖ Students are **ONLY** permitted to have the **novel** and *How to Read Literature Like a Professor* with post-it notes highlighting certain important passages. Mrs. Grant will check everyone’s materials at the start of the test.
- ❖ Students can purchase new or very cheap, used copies of the novels (Thriftbooks.com, Amazon etc.). If students forget their novels on test day, they will still be expected to take the test, but they will lose points for a lack of the required textual evidence.
- ❖ Tests will be on a locked school issued Chromebook; however, if students brought a personal laptop or they are having technical difficulties with their Chromebook, the test will be handwritten.
- ❖ The assessments are **TEST GRADES** and foundational to the course. Do not underestimate this work. Most of the work of this course will follow the summer assessment’s procedures, meaning students are expected to analyze the texts in person, without reliance on any form of online summaries, AI, or other technology.

Preparation:

- ❖ **What will the tests involve?** Students will be asked to analyze either a specific scene or aspect of the novel.
- ❖ **How should students prepare?** Students can prepare for the tests by applying Foster’s analysis techniques to all 3 novels. The following questions (some are from *How to Read Literature Like a Professor*) can guide students in their study of each text. Note these questions are examples and do not reflect the exact format of the tests. Students should analyze specific passages and important details **including but not limited to:** the hero’s quest, setting, geography, symbols, and overall themes of the work.
- ❖ **“I’m worried I won’t be prepared”:** The test is designed for students **truly reading the novels**. If students are genuinely engaging with the texts, and noting specific important passages and literary devices, they should be successful.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS: These questions are not to be handed in; they are to help you prepare for the type of topics/tasks the test might ask students.

1. What does the text reveal about the human condition? What is the overall theme of the work? What is the author attempting to illustrate to the reader? If there is one intrinsic truth about the novel, what is it?
2. Through which concepts, symbols, or and/or devices does the author demonstrate this meaning? Look for personification, imagery, diction, tone, juxtaposition, metaphors, etc. How does the author use all of these devices to illustrate the meaning of the text?
3. **from *How to Read Literature Like a Professor Every Trip is a Quest* – Chapter 1: “The real reason for a quest is always self-knowledge” (Foster 3).** In the novel, what is the quest? Choose a character and explains how he or she gains self-knowledge. Read this chapter again for more guidance.
4. **from *How to Read Literature Like a Professor It’s More Than Just Rain or Snow* – Chapter 9: “It’s never just rain” (Foster 70).** Choose a scene where weather or the environment is more than what it seems and explain the significance. Read this chapter again for more guidance.
5. **from *How to Read Literature Like a Professor Is That a Symbol?* – Chapter 12: “We want it to mean...one thing...[b]ut that handiness would result in a net loss: the novel would cease to be what it is, a network of meanings and significations that permits a nearly limitless range of possible interpretations” (Foster 106).** Choose a symbol in the novel and analyze how it demonstrates meaning for the characters, plot, geography, quest, moral lesson, etc. Pay special attention to how the author is illustrating the point of this symbol and the message the author is sending to the reader. Read this chapter again for more guidance.
6. **from *How to Read Literature Like a Professor Marked for Greatness* – Chapter 20: “How many stories do you know in which the hero is different from everyone else in some way...” (Foster 203).** Who is the hero in the novel? How do you know he or she is the hero? Is there a visible, physical difference between the hero and other characters? Read this chapter again for more guidance.
7. **from *How to Read Literature Like a Professor Don’t Read With Your Eyes* – Chapter 21: “...take the works as they were intended to be taken...” (Foster 234).** Choose a quote from the novel that reflects the overall meaning of the work. What can a reader glean from this reading experience? What is the essential truth the author is trying to convey? Read this chapter again for more guidance.

Be diligent and prepare yourself for a thought-provoking and challenging year. If you have any questions or concerns feel free to contact me: ggrant@ocvts.org

For now, I leave you **Mrs. Grant’s reading tips:**

1. Find a comfortable reading spot with good light.
2. If possible, purchase these books – even if it is a grubby, torn, used copy from Thriftbooks.com (honestly, those smell the best).
3. Highlight passages that seem important, flag pages with essential information, look up words you do not know, and annotate within the margins. Make reading an active experience where you enter the story and engage in discussion with the author.
4. Be consistent! Too often, students push off reading until it is too late to read well. It is important to keep a steady pace by reading each day. Before you know it, you will be half-way through. It is when students leave reading for the last minute that they seek supposed answers from online summaries. Understand this is **not** what an AP Literature/College-level student should do. You are here to analyze literature yourself, not have it worked out by someone else.
5. **Use audiobooks.** Today, most modern recordings are wonderful. These editions have proper voice actors adding to an already compelling story. You can listen along while you read, or if you are more of an auditory learner, listen in the car, when you are getting ready for the day, doing laundry, eating snacks etc. Use the local library apps (Libby & Hoopla!)

6. If the material is challenging, and it will be, discuss the concepts with a friend – perhaps someone taking the course – to work out difficult passages.
7. Finally, remember this excerpt from a *Reader's Digest* article by Marc Peyser: “You can take fish oil supplements or eat lots of turmeric. You can invest in a language class, puzzle books, or a few hours of exercise every week...But the cheapest, easiest, and most time-tested way to sharpen your brain is right in front of your face. It's called reading...That said, not all reading is created equal. Preliminary results from a study conducted at Stanford University indicate that **close literary reading in particular gives your brain a major workout**...increase in blood flowing to areas of the brain that control both cognitive and executive function, as opposed to the more limited effects that come from more leisurely reading.” Enjoy the workout.

Happy reading, Mrs. Grant