

A.P. English Language and Composition Summer 2010 Reading

To enrich your Advanced Placement experience, we ask that, before you return to school, you read the text listed below. This book will serve as the opening focus for study in the fall; we will study its narrative structure, its stylistic approach, and its thematic content.

As a student in A.P. English Language and Composition, our expectations are that you will be able to read and analyze a text at a high level of sophistication and work with an increasing sense of independence. Successful students in this A.P. class are one's who are able to self motivate, take personal responsibility, demonstrate intellectual curiosity and produce high quality work consistently and on time. This first assignment will set that tone for the class. Upon returning to school in the fall you will be assigned a variety of assessments that will require an understanding of the text beyond plot and the ability to incorporate direct references to the text.

Best wishes for an enjoyable and meaningful summer.

Sincerely,

Cathleen Case, Steve Morris, and Faisal Mohyuddin (teachers)

Please read and annotate the following for the first day of school in the fall:

Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave Written by Himself.

We are asking students to purchase the Norton Critical Edition

ISBN 0-393-96966-5 - you will probably have to order this on line through Amazon, Borders, or Barnes and Noble.

In addition to reading and enjoying the text, we require that you annotate the text as you read. Below you will find areas to consider with your annotations:

Focus for reading and writing: (Annotation means underlining key passages and writing marginal notes; underlining without marginal notes does not meet expectations.)

- ✓ A close reading of Douglass' text (specifically his experiences, actions and his argument) reveal a list of attributes, values, and challenges that could be labeled as typically "American" or as important to the American identity. Your annotations should reflect the various attributes of "Americans" that Douglass asserts.
- ✓ Your annotations also need to reveal a close reading of the text; you should note images, diction choices, and other stylistic elements that contribute to Douglass' argument about the American identity.

Prior to the beginning of school in the fall: (writing)

Select one of those attributes or values and explain how Douglass' text can be used to better understand why our society embraces that attribute, value, and/or challenge.

Remember, the focus of the essay is one characteristic/value/belief that *Americans* embrace—not just white or black Americans. Your response essay should be guided by a thesis (best demonstration of your skill) and supported by text (quotations) from the narrative. You will also need to demonstrate your ability to analyze Douglass' perspective. You may want to conclude with a statement about the applicability of Douglass' perspective on this characteristic to today. This response essay should be around 3 pages in length.

The annotated text and essay are due on the first day of class in the fall.