

AP English 12  
Ms. Ferrone

**Martha's Vineyard Regional High School  
English Department  
Summer Reading Guidelines 2023-24**



**(Below is a general overview of the English Department's summer reading philosophy and policies; scroll down for the course-specific assignment for AP 12.)**

*Summer reading assignments serve as a way for students to not only maintain their skills as readers, but also foster inquiry and spur imagination. The English teachers at Martha's Vineyard Regional High School want students to remain intellectually engaged throughout the summer so that they are prepared to begin their English courses primed and ready for the rigor such courses demand. The assignment(s) students will need to complete on the reading further serve as a diagnostic tool whereby teachers can assess students' skill at the outset of the course. The English Department at MVRHS encourages students at all levels and abilities to read over the summer; however, students choosing to take honors or Advanced Placement courses are required to successfully complete summer reading to ensure their placement in the course.*

**General Requirements and Policies:**

*Summer reading and writing assignments will vary by teacher, but at the very least will meet these basic requirements:*

- 1) Students enrolled in an honors or Advanced Placement level course (including honors level electives taken for English credit) will be required to read at least one book or multiple essays or articles before entering the course in September.
- 2) Students may be required to complete written work based on their reading before entering the course.

- 3) Students will be required to complete at least one assignment based on the reading assignment upon entering the course in the fall. This assignment could be a test, essay, project, or presentation and will be assigned within the first week of classes.

Failure to complete the summer reading assignment could result in the following\*:

- Course level change.\*\*
- No credit given on the assignment, which will negatively affect the first quarter grade.

\*Teachers will always take into account extenuating circumstances that may have prevented a student from completing the required work before determining the appropriate measure that will be taken to address the situation.

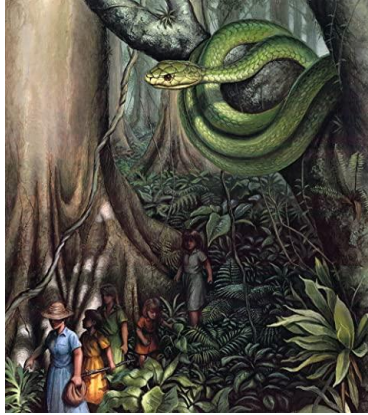
\*\*If a student chooses to move from an Advanced Placement level course to an honors level course, the student is still required to complete the summer reading assignment. (The teacher may choose to count the work the student completed for the AP course to the required work for the honors level course, but it is at the teacher's discretion.)

### **Recommendations for students:**

- 1) Communicate with your teacher regarding any questions or concerns you may have about the assignment and do so in a timely manner. Your future teacher's email address will appear on the summer reading assignment posted to the website.
- 2) If you are unsure about whether you want to take the honors or AP level course, familiarize yourself with both assignments. DO NOT assume you can drop down to an honors level class if you have not completed the summer work for either the AP or honors level.
- 3) Assignments will be posted on the school website by July 1 and some materials will be available at the school for pick up.
- 4) We encourage you to not only read the material you are assigned, but read additional books at your leisure. Websites like goodreads.com offer great book recommendations.
- 5) Remember Jhumpa Lahiri's words, "That's the thing about books. They let you travel without moving your feet."

Happy travelling, and have a wonderful summer!

**Advanced Placement English 12  
Summer Reading and Writing Assignment  
2023-2024**



**Purpose:** The purpose of the summer reading assignment for Advanced Placement English Literature and Composition is complex:

- To help build confidence and competence as readers of complex texts.
- To give you, when you enter the class in the fall, an immediate basis for discussion of literature and elements like theme, narrative, point of view, symbolism, plot structure, etc.
- To set up a basis for comparison with other works we will read during the year.
- To provide you with the beginnings of a repertoire of works you can write about on the AP Literature and Composition exam next spring.
- Last but not least, to enrich your mind and stimulate your imagination!

All incoming AP English 12 students are required to:

1. Read *The Poisonwood Bible* and *How To Read Literature Like a Professor* by Thomas C. Foster.
2. Complete annotations based on these readings(see guidelines below). These annotations will be used to both prepare for discussion and write about the novel during the first weeks of the course.

3. Take a multiple choice test(or comparable assessment) on *The Poisonwood Bible* and HTRLLP on the second full day of class.

Note: Students who fail to complete the summer work will be automatically transferred to another section of English 12. New MVRHS students will have two weeks to make up the work.

## Summer Reading Texts

1. Kingsolver, Barbara. *The Poisonwood Bible*. New York: HarperCollins, 1998. 543 pp.

One of the most talked about books of its time, *The Poisonwood Bible* won the National Book Prize of South Africa and was a finalist for the 1998 Pen/Faulkner and Pulitzer Prize awards in the United States. It has been a summer reading selection in numerous AP Language, Literature and World History courses and was one of the essay questions on the 2009 AP Literature and Composition Exam. A brief synopsis from the author's website, [www.kingsolver.com](http://www.kingsolver.com), follows:

*The Poisonwood Bible is a story told by the wife and four daughters of Nathan Price, a fierce, evangelical Baptist who takes his family and mission to the Belgian Congo in 1959. They carry with them everything they believe they will need from home, but soon find that all of it--from garden seeds to Scripture--is calamitously transformed on African soil. What follows is a suspenseful epic of one family's tragic undoing and remarkable reconstruction over the course of three decades in postcolonial Africa. The novel is set against one of the most dramatic political chronicles of the twentieth century: the Congo's fight for independence from Belgium, the murder of its first elected prime minister, the CIA coup to install his replacement, and the insidious progress of a world economic order that robs the fledgling African nation of its autonomy. Against this backdrop, Orleana Price reconstructs the story of her evangelist husband's part in the Western assault on Africa, a tale indelibly darkened by her own losses and unanswerable questions about her own culpability. Also narrating the story, by turns, are her four daughters--the self-centered, teenaged Rachel; shrewd adolescent twins Leah and Adah; and Ruth May, a prescient five-year-old. These sharply observant girls, who arrive in the Congo with racial preconceptions forged in 1950s Georgia, will be marked in surprisingly different ways by their father's intractable mission, and by Africa itself. Ultimately each must strike her own separate path to salvation. Their passionately intertwined stories become a compelling exploration of moral risk and personal responsibility.*

2. Foster, Thomas C. *How to Read Literature Like a Professor*, revised edition. Harper Perennial, 2014.

### **Guidelines for Annotation**

By now, most of you should have a method of annotation that works for you. However, the guidelines below suggest what kind of annotations will foster the kind of thinking about literature that we will be practicing in this course. I'm interested in hearing about your THOUGHTS, LINGERING QUESTIONS, and EPIPHANIES as you read. Additionally, these will be used to generate substantive discussion and analysis in class.

What you should have completed by the first day of class in September:

**For *The Poisonwood Bible*:** I will require you to **submit five pages of typed(12 point font) annotations** that span the entire novel, though you may need to do more. Since the novel is divided into books, I recommend a page or more of annotations per book. You may want to create a template that uses the three column note format with Thoughts, Questions, and Epiphanies assigned to each column, or another format that works for you. However, please read the annotation guidelines that are more specific to the reading of literature as you note your thoughts, questions and epiphanies. Be sure to cite quotes and page numbers that provoke your thoughts, questions, and epiphanies as well.

**For *How to Read Literature Like a Professor*:** Because you will be tested on your knowledge of the concepts and strategies this guide offers, I recommend noting what they are and how they apply to *The Poisonwood Bible* or another novel with which you are familiar. I will not be collecting annotations for this book, but should see your use of the concepts and strategies in your annotations for *The Poisonwood Bible*.

## Ideas for Annotating Literature

*“Every Text is a lazy machine asking the reader to do some of its work.”*

– Novelist Umberto Eco

- Look for patterns and label them (motifs, diction, syntax, symbols, images, and behavior).
- Mark passages that seem to jump out at you because they suggest an important idea or theme- of for any other reason (an arresting figure of speech or image, an intriguing sentence pattern, a striking example of foreshadowing, a key moment in the plot, a bit of dialogue that reveals character, clues about the setting etc.).
- Mark phrases, sentences, or passages that puzzle, intrigue please or displease you. Ask questions; make comments; talk back to the text.
- At the ends of chapters or sections write a bulleted list of key plot events. This not only forces you to think about what happened, see the novel or work as whole, and identify patterns, but you create a convenient record of the whole plot. (Just be sure not all your annotations are plot related. Notice themes, conflicts, use of literary devices, etc.)
- Consider how other texts, video or images as well as historical/current events and issues with which you are familiar connect with the themes and ideas of the novel.
- Consider the “So, what?” question in regards to the themes, conflicts and characters of the novel: why do they matter to you, to us, to humanity? What is the message or lesson or insight about human nature this story reveals?
- Circle words you want to learn or words that jump out at you for some reason. If you don’t want to stop reading, guess, then look the word up and jot down the relevant meaning later. You need not write out a full dictionary definition; it is often helpful to put the relevant meaning in your own words. If SAT prep has dampened your enthusiasm, reconsider the joy of adding your “word hoard” as the Beowulf poet calls it. \*Add them to your word lists.
- The Harvard College Library has posted an excellent guide to annotation, “Interrogating Texts: Six reading habits to Develop in your First Year at Harvard.”  
<https://guides.library.harvard.edu/sixreadinghabits>
- If you still need help, please visit this supportive essay on how to annotate a text,  
<http://www.tnellen.com/cybereng/adler.ht>

## ANNOTATION ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

<p><b>CHECK +:</b> The annotations show a sophisticated understanding and engagement with the novel and its themes. Thoughts, questions and epiphanies show thoughtful attention to literary concepts and terms as they apply to characterization, conflict and theme, but also make connections with ideas and knowledge outside the text(the broader context). Questions and commentary are supported by apt textual evidence/examples and reflect insightful thinking.</p>	<p><b>CHECK:</b> The annotations show understanding and engagement with the novel and some insightful commentary. Thoughts, questions and epiphanies show attention to literary concepts and terms as they apply to characterization, conflict and theme and may make some connections to a broader context. Questions and commentary are supported by apt textual evidence/examples.</p>	<p><b>CHECK -:</b> The annotations show weak understanding and minimal engagement with the novel and its themes. Thoughts, questions and epiphanies show minimal attention to literary concepts and terms as they apply to characterization, conflict and theme. Questions and commentary are not always supported by textual evidence/examples. The commentary focusses mainly on plot and may include errors in comprehension.</p>
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