

## AP ENGLISH LITERATURE Summer Assignments:

1. Read *How to Read Literature Like a Professor* by Thomas C. Foster
2. Read and complete a Guided Notes sheet on *Beloved* by Toni Morrison
3. Complete the Five Significant Passages Analysis assignment
4. Read the course syllabus

### Note about *Beloved*:

Before you read this text, please be aware that this text does contain some sensitive and disturbing material, specifically involving racism, violence, and sexual assault. I know that this material may be difficult. I also encourage you to care for your safety and well-being. I am here to support you in any way you need. If you have any questions or concerns before reading and/or later discussing this material, please contact Ms. Cutalo ([acutalo@stuartschool.org](mailto:acutalo@stuartschool.org)).

### Guided Notes Sheet Assignment:

As you read *Beloved*, create a Guided Notes sheet on a google doc. You should:

- Keep a complete list of characters, with brief descriptions.
- Note the **setting(s) and points of view** in each chapter (when, where, who). Note the shifts when they happen.
- Note **moments of significance** in each chapter (aim for about 4-5 of these per chapter, but use your judgment for chapters that are very short or very long). A moment can be significant because it draws our attention to any of the following: develops the plot, a conflict, a character, a relationship, a pattern or motif within the story. It could mark an important shift or moment of growth for a character. It could add another layer to a relationship. For each of these “moments,” note what you see on the surface (in regular font) and why you think it could matter (in some variety of the font to differentiate, i.e. italics). These ideas do NOT have to be fully formed. In fact, this is the time to ask questions and posing possibilities about what it could mean, rather than putting forth a fully formed assertion. **Think of this assignment as a way to process your thoughts (however messy or jumbled) as you read. Feel free to take on an informal voice with your guided notes and speak as if you’re actually talking to yourself or me. Be real. Be you. Also, humor is always encouraged and welcome :)**
- **Track two of the following motifs:** Houses, the color red, water, trees, milk. For each time you recognize the motif in the story, note the page number and give the quotation where the motif appears. 5-10 motif moments for each motif.

- Choose at least **ten unfamiliar words**. Copy the phrase or sentence in which they appear; note the page numbers. Look up the meanings. Write them in your own words. Be aware of the words' parts of speech for correct usage. Use each word in an original sentence.

**Five Significant Passages Analysis Assignment:  
(\*This is where you'll use your academic voice)**

**After you've read *Beloved*:**

Use any of Foster's chapters as a guide in analyzing **five different significant passages (approximately a short paragraph in length each)** from *Beloved*. A "significant passage" could be a description of a meal, a description of a particular symbol you see, an allusion to the Bible or Greek mythology, the importance of weather in a particular scene- anything Foster covers in *How to Read Literature Like a Professor*. A successful passage analysis will include each of the following:

- a. The significant passage from *Beloved*
- b. A specific quotation from Foster (the quotation should provide the guidance you need to analyze specific moments from the *Beloved* passage)
- c. 7-8 sentences of analysis (not including the quotations from *Beloved* and *How to Read Literature...*) in which you discuss the ways that this specific moment from *Beloved* fits within the conventions that Foster discusses. Does Morrison use this particular element (i.e. a symbol, a Biblical allusion, the weather) in a way that is conventional or surprising to us? How does this particular moment give meaning to the story as a whole? How is it important in developing character, relationships, plot, mood, or any other element in the story?
- d. In-text citations and a works cited page for all quotations and paraphrases of texts (in proper MLA format)

**\*The use of outside sources or AI technology, such as Chat GPT, internet websites, such as Sparknotes, Shmoop, LitCharts, articles, or print sources, in completing either the guided notes sheet or the *Beloved* analysis is prohibited. Failure to follow these guidelines will result in a 0 for the assignment and disciplinary consequences.**

**Recap for Summer Work:**

1. Complete *Beloved* Guided Notes sheet and Five Significant Passages Assignment (**due on the first day of class**). (Submit electronically in the same document through Google Classroom)

2. Read the course syllabus (**due on the first day of class**)
3. In-class essay **on the third day of class**. You will receive a prompt in the style of an AP free-response question (Question #3 on the AP test). While you will not need to directly quote from *Beloved*, you will need to refer to multiple specific moments from the story in your analysis of the text.

#### Sample “Significant Moment” Analysis:

Moment #1: “Crossing the porch where we had dined that June night three months before, I came to a small rectangle of light which I guessed was the pantry window. The blind was drawn, but I found a rift at the sill. Daisy and Tom were sitting opposite each other at the kitchen table, with a plate of cold fried chicken between them, and two bottles of ale. He was talking intently across the table at her, and in his earnestness his hand had fallen upon and covered her own. Once in a while she looked up at him and nodded in agreement. They weren’t happy, and neither of them had touched the chicken or the ale — and yet they weren’t unhappy either. There was an unmistakable air of natural intimacy about the picture, and anybody would have said that they were conspiring together” (98).

Analysis: Foster claims early in his second chapter that “when people eat or drink together, it’s communion” (8). He further explains that “if a well-run meal or snack portends good things for community and understanding, then the failed meal stands as a bad sign” (11). Tom and Daisy’s meal lies somewhere in the middle. Fitzgerald uses this meal after a pivotal moment in his story—after Daisy has chosen Tom over Gatsby— in order to lay Daisy and Tom’s relationship bare, showing it for exactly what it is. After all, Nick witnesses this moment only because he looks beyond the “drawn blinds.” He sees a meal, and by extension, Tom and Daisy’s true relationship, because he trespasses into a world where he shouldn’t be. First, and most noticeably, “neither of them had touched the chicken or the ale.” They are unable to engage in a typical familial activity: eating a meal together. Through this detail, Fitzgerald suggests that something is broken between them and that their relationship lacks true intimacy. Furthermore, Fitzgerald’s choice of food is ironic. Daisy and Tom are not sitting down to an elegant and upscale dinner with multiple courses, as we would expect a married couple of their class to do; instead, their meal is not only unsophisticated, but also “cold” and unappetizing, just like their relationship. The only “community” and “natural intimacy” we see exists outside the act of eating. They “conspire” together, presumably to shield Daisy and, instead, harm another human being who does not hold the same privilege as they do. Through their meal, Fitzgerald not only establishes that Tom and Daisy’s marriage is secure and even invincible, but also that it will never truly fulfill either of them.

