

Honors American Literature & Composition 10

MCC Summer Reading Assignment 2020-2021

Greetings! I hope you'll see this assignment as an *opportunity* to read instead of a task to complete. Reading has been proven to reduce stress, increase your vocabulary, improve your memory, and strengthen your analytical thinking skills, in addition to many other benefits. I try to read a little bit every day, and I hope this assignment will encourage you to do the same.

Please note that your **choice text** must be purchased and **turned in to Mrs. Silva** the **FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL** as it will be added to our classroom library.

Assignment #1 - In order to facilitate a wide variety of interests, I am giving you academic freedom to select a book that you want to read, fiction or nonfiction, and then simply read it. The only stipulation? It must be a work of literary merit at/above your reading level, AND I must approve it. First, join our "Honors American Literature & Composition 10" Google Classroom (**Code: erspxtg**). Next, make your text selection by responding to the question posted in Google Classroom no later than **6/12/2020**. DO NOT SELECT a text you have read before either independently or for any other course at MCC.

Assignment #2 - Read your choice text and complete the assignment posted in Google Classroom by **8/7/2020** (NOON). For the assignment, you will need to address all of the following areas. Skip a line between each bulleted request.

- ★ Title, Author, Publication Date
- ★ ONE Sentence HOLISTIC INTERPRETATION of the text. This means you are writing just one sentence which interprets the entire text in an analytical manner.
- ★ Explain the significance of the title. There is always an intention, so prove it (6-8 sentences).
- ★ If you were giving a 1-minute speech on this text, recommending it to a group, what would you say? I am looking for an extended paragraph for this response (12-15 sentences).
- ★ Lastly, defend the literary merit that is inherent in the text you chose to read. I would expect that you write an extended paragraph for this response (12-15 sentences). See page 3 of this document for an explanation of "literary merit."

OPTIONAL Assignment: Challenge yourself to read 1-2 additional books. You do not have to purchase the additional book(s). With a library card, you can check books out at the public library including online options. Here is the link to the [Muskegon Area District Library- Free Resources](#) including how to easily get a library card! Another idea would be to borrow books from classmates. If you look in Google Classroom, you can see what everyone else is reading for Assignment #1. Complete the attached sheet for **each** book that you read to earn **ADDITIONAL CREDIT** to start the school year! You can earn additional credit for up to 2 books. The sheet(s) must be turned in the first day of school to earn additional credit.

Questions? Concerns? Please contact me ksilva@muskegoncatholic.org

BOOK CHALLENGE PERSONAL RESPONSE

*You may print multiple copies of this sheet out, or you may recreate this handout on a piece of notebook paper.
Please remember to fill out one of these sheets for EACH book that you read.*

Student Name: _____

Book Title & Author: _____

Answer the following questions in complete sentences.

1. Did you like the book? Why or why not? Would you recommend it to other people? What types of people might like this book?

2. What struggles did you encounter as you read? (Was there anything you found difficult? Were there vocabulary words or concepts you didn't understand?)

3. Choose an idea that the book presents and respond personally to that idea. (For example, maybe the book is a coming of age story about a kid who's pressured to do something they don't want to do. You could write about a time that something similar happened to you, showing how you can relate to the character)

Parent Signature: _____

WHAT DOES "LITERARY MERIT" MEAN?

“Literary merit’ can seem like code for really old, very moldy, and exceedingly boring. You might also think it means books are written by dead white dudes who know nothing about modern life. As fun as it is to imagine a literary mafia full of doddering old professors plotting world domination through boredom, it’s not true.

CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS TO HELP YOU DETERMINE IF A BOOK IS “OF LITERARY MERIT.”

NOTE: Questions 1 and 2 are probably the most helpful in determining a book’s merit.

- 1. Is it historically significant? Does the content help mark the passage of a momentous time in society?**
- 2. Does it give a voice to the people who are underrepresented and have been written out of our history books and popular media?**
3. Do the characters live, breathe, and behave as real people do?
4. How well do the author’s words create a world in your mind that is just as, if not more, vivid and alive as the one you live in?
5. Are the themes integrated in an insightful, skillful, and original way?
6. Consider the author’s prose. Are his/her words and sentences crafted strategically and beautifully to act as the building blocks of the story?
7. What’s the dialogue like? Does it convey a picture of a character’s personality, background, deceptions, and thoughts through their words alone.
8. Does the structure of the story help to tell the story itself?

It’s about more than just being an entertaining book. Books that have some literary merit should have some *substance* to them. Whether that substance takes the form of wonderful storytelling, a fresh new style, or dazzling historical significance (or some combination of the above), you know you’re onto something.