

## 2012-2013 PRE-REQUISITE SUMMER READING

### Advanced Placement Literature & Composition

This year's summer assignments are tied together by shared qualities of depth and brevity. The total page count of the assigned reading is less than a third of what it has been in past years yet these works will require a close, thoughtful initial reading followed by (at least) re-readings of selected passages throughout. So the overall work load should be consistent with past years. As you read, keep in mind my expectation that you will be spending significantly more time and thought per page assigned than you are most likely used to doing.

You'll have to obtain your own copy of Waiting for Godot and Heart of Darkness. You may borrow of copy of Dubliners from me or you may obtain your own copy. Getting your own copy will allow you to mark in the margins of the text which will be helpful as you read and, later on, when you are reviewing and writing about the work.

The assignments below may be done in any order. They should be complete and ready to turn in on the first day of school. All work must be typed (and it must be double-spaced, in 12-point Times New Roman font, and with 1" margins).

#### Assignment #1: Poetry

Read Wallace Stevens' poem "Sunday Morning" (attached). In a page or two, explain the theme of the poem (a sustained insight about life that the work offers).

Then pick six passages throughout the poem (passages can range from a single word to an entire sentence). Comment on the significance of each passage, discussing how the passage uses sound, allusion, repetition, word-choice, syntax, tone, imagery, or any other literary element in order to further the poem's overall meaning.

#### Assignment #2: Drama

Read Samuel Beckett's play Waiting for Godot. Find a partner (or three), and in a manner that is true to the play, put on a scene of the play that has internal coherence to itself (makes sense on its own). You should consider a length of approximately one and a half pages per person as a suitable length. Lines should be memorized. This may either be performed live in class at the start of the year or turned in on video (VHS acceptable, DVD preferred).

In order to facilitate finding partners, you may be involved in a second production. Taking part in a second production will yield up to fifteen extra credit points on this assignment. There are no extra points for being involved in additional productions.

Remember: "in a manner that is true to the play." Try to be as authentic in tone and style to the play as written as possible.

### Assignment #3: Short-Fiction

Read Dubliners by James Joyce, a collection of stories about ordinary people living in Dublin, Ireland. As you read, pick out ten key passages (only one per story; there are fifteen stories so not all stories need to have a key passage) and comment on their individual significance to their particular story. Then, in a page and a half to two page paper, explain how the ten passages selected all show some unified theme or element that ties the stories together.

### Assignment #4: Fiction

Read Heart of Darkness by Joseph Conrad. The summer assignment's "long" assignment is just a novella, a short novel or really long short story, depending on how you want to think of it. But you really will need to read it twice. As a warning: historically, most of my students don't like it the first time through. Keep thinking it through and it will reward a second reading, so read it twice.

For your assignment, I want you to come up with the five most important questions we should discuss as a class regarding this novel. List the questions, along with an explanation of why each question is significant. Then, in a page or two, answer one of your questions.

If you have any problems or concerns that I can help you with over the summer, you can contact me via e-mail. My e-mail is [shanson@haywood.k12.nc.us](mailto:shanson@haywood.k12.nc.us).

“Sunday Morning”  
Wallace Stevens

1

Complacencies of the peignoir, and late  
Coffee and oranges in a sunny chair,  
And the green freedom of a cockatoo  
Upon a rug mingle to dissipate  
The holy hush of ancient sacrifice. 5  
She dreams a little, and she feels the dark  
Encroachment of that old catastrophe,  
As a calm darkens among water-lights.  
The pungent oranges and bright, green wings  
Seem things in some procession of the dead, 10  
Winding across wide water, without sound.  
The day is like wide water, without sound,  
Stilled for the passing of her dreaming feet  
Over the seas, to silent Palestine,  
Dominion of the blood and sepulchre. 15

2

Why should she give her bounty to the dead?  
What is divinity if it can come  
Only in silent shadows and in dreams?  
Shall she not find in comforts of the sun,  
In pungent fruit and bright, green wings, or else 20  
In any balm or beauty of the earth,  
Things to be cherished like the thought of heaven?  
Divinity must live within herself:  
Passions of rain, or moods in falling snow;  
Grievings in loneliness, or unsubdued 25  
Elations when the forest blooms; gusty  
Emotions on wet roads on autumn nights;  
All pleasures and all pains, remembering  
The bough of summer and the winter branch.  
These are the measures of her soul. 30

3

Jove in the clouds had his inhuman birth.  
No mother suckled him, no sweet land gave  
Large-mannered motions to his mythy mind  
He moved among us, as a muttering king,  
Magnificent, would move among his hinds, 35      hinds = shepherds  
Until our blood, commingling, virginal,  
With heaven, brought such requital to desire  
The very hinds discerned it, in a star.  
Shall our blood fail? Or shall it come to be  
The blood of paradise? And shall the earth 40  
Seem all of paradise that we shall know?

The sky will be much friendlier then than now,  
A part of labor and a part of pain,  
And next in glory to enduring love,  
Not this dividing and indifferent blue. 45

4

She says, "I am content when wakened birds,  
Before they fly, test the reality  
Of misty fields, by their sweet questionings;  
But when the birds are gone, and their warm fields  
Return no more, where, then, is paradise?" 50  
There is not any haunt of prophecy,  
Nor any old chimera of the grave,  
Neither the golden underground, nor isle  
Melodious, where spirits gat them home,  
Nor visionary south, nor cloudy palm 55  
Remote on heaven's hill, that has endured  
As April's green endures; or will endure  
Like her remembrance of awakened birds,  
Or her desire for June and evening, tipped  
By the consummation of the swallow's wings. 60

5

She says, "But in contentment I still feel  
The need for some imperishable bliss."  
Death is the mother of beauty; hence from her,  
Alone, shall come fulfillment to our dreams  
And our desires. Although she strews the leaves 65  
Of sure obliteration on our paths,  
The path sick sorrow took, the many paths  
Where triumph rang its brassy phrase, or love  
Whispered a little out of tenderness,  
She makes the willow shiver in the sun 70  
For maidens who were wont to sit and gaze  
Upon the grass, relinquished to their feet.  
She causes boys to pile new plums and pears  
On disregarded plate. The maidens taste  
And stray impassioned in the littering leaves. 75

6

Is there no change of death in paradise?  
Does ripe fruit never fall? Or do the boughs  
Hang always heavy in that perfect sky,  
Unchanging, yet so like our perishing earth,  
With rivers like our own that seek for seas 80  
They never find, the same receding shores  
That never touch with inarticulate pang?

Why set the pear upon those river-banks  
 Or spice the shores with odors of the plum?  
 Alas, that they should wear our colors there, 85  
 The silken weavings of our afternoons,  
 And pick the strings of our insipid lutes!  
 Death is the mother of beauty, mystical,  
 Within whose burning bosom, we devise  
 Our earthly mothers waiting, sleeplessly. 90

7

Supple and turbulent, a ring of men  
 Shall chant in orgy on a summer morn  
 Their boisterous devotion to the sun,  
 Not as a god, but as a god might be,  
 Naked among them, like a savage source. 95  
 Their chant shall be a chant of paradise,  
 Out of their blood, returning to the sky;  
 And in their chant shall enter, voice by voice,  
 The windy lake wherein their lord delights,  
 The trees, like serafin, and echoing hills, 100      serafin = celestial  
 That choir among themselves long afterward.      beings (seraphim)  
 They shall know well the heavenly fellowship  
 Of men that perish and of summer morn.  
 And whence they came and whither they shall go  
 The dew upon their feet shall manifest. 105

8

She hears, upon that water without sound,  
 A voice that cries, "The tomb in Palestine  
 Is not the porch of spirits lingering.  
 It is the grave of Jesus, where he lay."  
 We live in an old chaos of the sun, 110  
 Or old dependency of day and night,  
 Or island solitude, unsponsored, free,  
 Of that wide water, inescapable.  
 Deer walk upon our mountains, and the quail  
 Whistle about us their spontaneous cries; 115  
 Sweet berries ripen in the wilderness;  
 And, in the isolation of the sky,  
 At evening, casual flocks of pigeons make  
 Ambiguous undulations as they sink,  
 Downward to darkness, on extended wings. 120