**Summer Reading Assignment**

**AP Literature and Composition (English III-AP)**

**Dr. Morris**

**Course Overview:**

The AP English Literature and Composition course aligns to an introductory college-level literary analysis course. The course engages students in the close reading and critical analysis of imaginative literature to deepen their understanding of the ways writers use language to provide both meaning and pleasure. As they read, students consider a work’s structure, style, and themes, as well as its use of figurative language, imagery, symbolism, and tone. Writing assignments include expository, analytical, and argumentative essays that require students to analyze and interpret literary works. (College Board, 2014)

Consistent with the College Board’s guidelines, students will read a broad range of sixteenth to twenty-first century literary works drawn from multiple cultures. Students will be coached in reading and analytical strategies that underpin heightened understandings of content, form, complexity, and meaning.

To enter English III-AP next year, students are required to complete the following summer reading assignment. **This assignment is due the first day of school.**

**Assignment 1:**  Obtain the following text:

*The Scarlet Letter* by Nathaniel Hawthorne—available for pickup in my classroom

* Please purchase your own copy if you want the ability to freely mark the text. School copies may not be marked.

**Assignment 2:**  Read and annotate *The Scarlet Letter.* Please pay particular attention to the following elements:

**Theme:** *The Scarlet Letter* explores the effects of sin, guilt, punishment, and revenge. Choose **one** of the following themes (either broad or specific) and mark and annotate the text when you see the theme developing. What is Hawthorne trying to tell us?

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| **Broad Themes (take these in any direction you wish)** | |
| •Good vs. evil  •Sin vs. guilt  •Psychological effects of sin  •Revenge | •Individuality vs. conformity  •Forgiveness vs. punishment  •Hypocrisy |
| **Specific Themes (If you wish to look for something very specific)** | |
| •Guilt can destroy a person, body and soul.  •The punishment of others may not be as destructive as self-guilt.  •Within each person is the capacity for both good and evil.  •One must have the courage to be true to one’s self. | •True repentance must come from within  •Even well intended deceptions and secrets can lead to destruction.  •We become stronger when we recognize and deal with our weaknesses  •Revenge destroys the victim and the seeker.  •The choices people make determine what they become. |

**Symbols**: The Scarlet Letter is replete with symbols. The list below includes some that are present and change throughout the novel. As you read, mark the symbols. Why is Hawthorne using them? What message is he trying to convey? Annotate the text with your ideas.

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| --- | --- |
| • The rose and rose bush  • The prison  • The scaffold  • Sunlight  • The absence and presence of light | • Colors and absence of color  • The forest  • The Black Man  • The scarlet letter, i.e., the letter A  • The names of Dimmesdale, Chillingworth, Pearl |

**Rhetorical Devices** Mark the use of the devices in your text. What is Hawthorne’s purpose? Although you are free to annotate as many as you like, please focus on the following:

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| --- | --- |
| •Contrasts (ie. Good/evil, dark/light, forest/town, color/absence of color, supernatural/ reality, etc.)  • Duality (ie. How does Pearl’s character reflect the duality of the Puritan community?)  • Ambiguity  • Allegory | • Allusion  • Diction  • Contradiction/ Irony  • Connotations (especially with names)  • Motif (hand over heart, The Black Man, the color red) |