



AP Literature is a challenging and rewarding course. Largely discussion-based, you will be asked to think, process, consider, and participate every day; however, in order for our in-class activities to be worthwhile, it is imperative that you do the outside of class assignments—and that includes, and commences with, summer reading.

There are only two summer reading books this year: *Frankenstein*, and *Cannery Row*. *Frankenstein* is dense and Victorian, but the story is excellent and timeless and students regularly report that *Frankenstein* is one of their favorite books in the AP curriculum. The language of the initial chapters takes some getting used to—once *Frankenstein* actually begins creation of his monster the read becomes much easier. Keep reading past the “tough stuff”—the themes and ideas of this text are beautiful and tragic and each year at least 20% of the students use *Frankenstein* on the AP test. It is imperative that you read and process *Frankenstein* completely.

The second text, *Cannery Row*, is a seemingly simple, and quite humorous read by John Steinbeck. Its value is not necessarily in its depth as a story but in its artistry as a work of literature. **Read** this text carefully and **note** the beautiful and complex passages where it is evident that there is much depth lurking just below the surface. You will be presenting prose analyses in groups during our brief unit on this book and these will lay an excellent foundation for the prose passage dissections we will be completing in large number as the year continues.

Summer Reading Due Dates:

July 15—Blog shared with me at Daugherty.Jacqueline@rrcs.org
July 30—First Blog response posted
August 19—Second Blog response posted
August 25—Research Assignment (Allusions) due in class
August 25—Questions on Steinbeck due in class
August 26—Multiple Choice Test on *Frankenstein*
August 29—Short Answer Test on *Cannery Row*
August 30—Essay Test on *Frankenstein*

Assignments:

I. *Frankenstein*:

- Read the text in its entirety. Although you may borrow a book from the school, I would highly recommend that you purchase this text so that you can write your notes in it over the summer.
- Study the handout of the British Romantics, the Gothic era, the Victorian era, and Mary Shelley. Be prepared to differentiate between the British and the American Romantics on the summer reading test.
- Complete a 4-5 paragraph Blog entry on Blogger.com that reveals your feelings about *Frankenstein* and your experiences with the text as you worked through it (see attached rubric).
- The summer reading test involves a multiple choice assessment (covering the plot of the story, its characters, and the background information you studied over the summer, as well as questions that ask you to make inferences based on your knowledge of the text), a passage dissection, and an essay question in the “open question” format—I will go over this format with you prior to the essay test. Dates: Multiple choice test: **Friday, August 26**. Essay test: **Tuesday, August 30**.

II. **Cannery Row:**

- Read the text in its entirety. You will need to purchase this book—there should be some available at Half Price Books and certainly they are available on Amazon.
- Create a 4-5 paragraph blog entry on this text as well.
- Complete the attached questions that will help you to understand Steinbeck and his philosophy a little bit better. He was a highly thoughtful individual and he developed, what many consider to be, his own concept of religion. These questions will be due on **Thursday, August 25th**, and you will complete a short answer test on how *Cannery Row* reveals these concepts on **Monday, August 29th**.

We will take AT LEAST until the second week in October on these two books alone! This means that during the bulk of your college searching and processing (hint, hint—get it done early), you will have very little outside homework for me! However, our discussions are in-depth, and if you want to do well during the first quarter you need READ each of these books slowly and thoughtfully over the summer and take notes as you do! Any assignments I give you in the first quarter will be reading supplemental texts and re-reading things you already read (which if you already have the context, will take you no time at all!).

- ## III. **Research:**
- Complete the attached research assignment on biblical and mythological allusions. Allusions are present in almost everything we will read this year and an understanding of them will deepen and enrich your understanding of all classic literature we encounter. This research will also help you immeasurably on the AP multiple choice. This assignment will be due on **Thursday, August 25th**—the day we return. You must **handwrite** your responses to the research in your notes. Please work independently on this.

Blog Responses

You will be using www.blogger.com over the course of this school year to do things like reflect on texts, write OP's (Occasional Papers—I will explain these later), and reflect on your own growth and development as a writer of AP responses. I will be responding to your Blog as well from time to time—and am happy to look at it anytime you have something you would like to share with me. You must set up a Blogger.com account by **July 15th** (and share it with me by then too: my email is Daugherty.Jacqueline@rrcs.org). You will post your responses to each text on Blogger.com as well. One of the responses must be posted by **July 30th**. The second response must be posted by **August 19th**. It does not matter to me which text you do first—we will start the year by studying *Frankenstein*.

You are required to write one 4-5 paragraph response to each text and post them by the dates listed above. While these responses may (and should) be informal and subjective, they also must be organized, proofread, thoughtful, original, knowledge-based, and in ABC format. Please don't write them until you are FINISHED with each novel as I'll expect your responses to reflect thorough knowledge of the text as a whole. Each response should be typed.

Style: I'm looking for an informal reaction to SPECIFIC aspects of the texts. Each paragraph should focus on a specific question, thought (or set of thoughts), or observation (or set of observations). You're not required to analyze--although you can--but instead are being asked to write a thoughtful, first-person reaction that indicates your **active reading** and understanding (processing might be a better word here...you're not required to understand everything) of the **entire text**.

Example: If you were writing on *The Scarlet Letter*, you might have one paragraph focus on how despicable of a character Chillingworth seems to you and how Hawthorne creates him, one paragraph focus on how you either could or couldn't identify with Hester based on Hawthorne's creation of her and her situation, and a third on why Hawthorne might have chosen to write such a criticism of Puritan society in an era when Puritanism was NOT thriving (Is it a political book, a book encouraging social action, or just a thoughtful piece of Historical Fiction?). These are just examples. You should write on whatever aspects of the text are interesting to YOU!

You have two options as far as the examples you use: use quotes (which, if appropriate, are highly effective), or use very specific examples that show your knowledge. Quotes are great if you are commenting on an author's portrayal or on a character's development; however, in some cases when you are talking about an entire work quotes are actually TOO specific to demonstrate what it is that you're talking about. So, for example, if you're talking about the relationship between Hester and Dimmesdale, you might want to provide many specific examples of their relationship and interactions for one of your B statements rather than try to select a quote that embodies their interactions over the entire text. You need to use your judgment!

A 4-5 paragraph essay for me should always have some semblance of an introduction and a conclusion and some semblance of a thesis. This particular assignment asks for an informal reflection, so your intro, conclusion, and thesis should be reflective in nature too--keep your style and voice consistent throughout. This would give you 2-3 body paragraphs with solid reflective material and examples.

As far as paragraph content goes--they do not all need to contain the same "theme." The paragraphs only need to be connected by your interest and passion about those subjects (and, of course, the text itself). They can be on completely separate and different topics.

And PLEASE remember that this is an assignment to prove your reading. Write about your response to the TEXT.

Rubric for Blog Responses

	Strong 10 pts each	Average 7 pts each	Weak 5 pts each	0 pts
Grammar, Mechanics, and Style	Response is proofread and error-free Sentence structure is interesting and varied Style is mature and appropriate for an AP reflection	Response contains 2-5 errors in grammar and mechanics Sentence structure is mostly interesting and varied Style and voice have lapses in maturity and appropriateness	Response contains more than 5 errors in grammar and mechanics but is still clear Sentence structure lacks interest and variety Style and voice are not appropriate or mature	Failure to proofreading severely impedes understanding Sentence structure is not interesting and varied Style and voice are inappropriate for the assignment
Textual Knowledge and Content	Response reflects solid knowledge and understanding of the text Supporting details are apt and specific Reflection is thoughtful and original	Response reflects solid knowledge and understanding of the text Supporting details are not as apt or specific Reflection is thoughtful, but lacks true originality	Response reflects lapses in understanding and textual knowledge Supporting details are only occasionally apt and specific Reflection is occasionally thoughtful, but lacks true originality	Response does not reflect knowledge and understanding of the text Specific supporting details are sparse and/or contain inaccuracies Response is not thoughtful or original

Student Score _____/20 *2= _____/40

If at ANY point you need to contact me with questions, concerns, or problems, email me at Daugherty.Jacqueline@rrcs.org. I look forward to hearing from you!

--Mrs. D

Frankenstein—Mary Shelley
Summer Reading Background Information
Mrs. Daugherty

Frankenstein is a TOUGH read! The last Victorian novel that was part of the curriculum was *A Tale of Two Cities*--and I'm sure you all remember how hard that one was the first time around! This particular tale is so unique and timeless--you probably knew the gist of the story before you even picked up the book--and it really is worth it to work through the difficult language.

Although a challenging read, this book is a true gem. It's beautiful, it's unique, it's interesting, it's troubling, and it's deep. Here is a list of helpful hints and reminders that have helped ME through this difficult book.

Mary Shelley:

- *Mary Shelley's mother*, Mary Wollstonecraft, was a forerunner of the women's "lib" movement of the late 1700's. She died 10 days after Mary Shelley was born. Her treatise called "A Vindication of the Rights of Women" (we'll be looking at it in September) was virtually all Shelley knew of her mother. Shelley often blamed herself for her mother's death.
- *Mary Shelley's father* was a brilliant intellectual who expected his young daughter to be one as well, and he required her to participate in his intellectual conversations with friends at a very young age. Shelley loved her father, but he was always very aloof and distant from her. Isn't it interesting that parenthood and the obligations and responsibilities of being a parent were of real interest to Shelley?
- Mary fell in love with (then married) *Percy Bysshe Shelley* (a great poet and writer) and ran away with him when she was 16. Bysshe Shelley's pregnant wife committed suicide shortly thereafter.
- Mary Shelley wrote *Frankenstein* on a bet when she was only 19 years old--she, Percy Bysshe Shelley, and George Gordon Lord Byron (another great poet) all challenged one another to come up with a "ghost story." Mary was the only one who finished hers.
- There are passages in this book that are riddled with allusions--Dante's *Inferno*, Milton's *Paradise Lost*, The Bible, the myth of Prometheus, and many others that are actually named in the text. Hint: If you do your summer research assignment first, the allusions in the text will add much richness and depth to your reading!
- This book is very Victorian, very Romantic, and very Gothic. If you read over the notes (following) on the different time periods, some of the nuances of the book might make more sense.

Any time you read anything, it is important to place it within the context of its time. Art is created for its audience, and the same is very much true of literature. Mary Shelley wrote her novel in 1816—at the end of the Romantic/Gothic period and the beginning of the Victorian. You will see elements of each literary time period in her novel. As you read, pay attention to these conventions and when they appear, as well as how they might have helped Shelley to achieve her ultimate purpose.

***Frankenstein* as a Victorian text:**

If you're struggling with the "Victorian" nature of the book--here are some things to help guide your focus.

- There are three layers of this plot, told by three distinctly different narrators. Pay attention to the similarities in setting, narrator motivation, characterization, etc. These similarities will provide clues to theme.
- Read through the characteristics of Victorian novels that appear below, and the qualities and characteristics of the Gothic/Romantic. Despite having written *Frankenstein* when she was 19, Shelley displays remarkable skill at creating a novel that both "fits" all three time periods (therefore meeting the expectations of her readers) and challenges some of the conventions at the same time.

Victorian Novels (Victorian Period—Roughly 1837-1901):

- Although Shelley wrote this story in 1816, you will see that many of these qualities and characteristics fit the Victorian time period. Because she came from such intellectual circles, she was "ahead of her time" in considering, especially, the repercussions of scientific advancement. Hence, she is especially "Victorian" in the use of her novel as a tool of social criticism.
- The Victorian writer enjoyed creating "layers" of meaning through symbols and overlapping plots--which is part of the reason that we still study so many Victorian novels!
- Characterization is a primary concern. Mary Shelley does a really nice job of characterization--especially of Frankenstein, the monster, Clerval, and Elizabeth. Pay attention to what each character reveals about him/herself through speech. Remember, too, that the Victorians considered physical appearance a clue to someone's true nature--How does Shelley challenge this Victorian convention? The Victorians also believed mightily in the male and female ideal. Remember that perfect beautiful women were often considered dangerous and were often killed off by the author.
- The setting is QUITE important. It influences mood and provides clues to interpretation.
- Allusions are prevalent (There are many, many allusions in this novel—Biblical, mythological, and poetic, especially.)
- Repeated symbols, figurative language, and images provide clues to the novel's themes. Pay attention to anything you notice is repeated.
- Shifts in narrative voice (hence the three narrators)
- Servants and women provide clues to how society really works.
- Character archetypes: Byronic Hero (strong, dark, complex, brooding male--often attractive); Classic Greek Beauty (the Byronic hero's opposite--morally upstanding, attractive, with lighter features); Beautiful "dead" woman--beautiful women were often considered dangerous because they represented a force that could not be controlled. Note: These archetypes are not particularly present in their truest archetypal form in this novel; however, the Byronic hero is named for Byron's concept of the hero—and Byron was one of the two poets who inspired Shelley to write the novel in the first place.... How do you see evidence of the Byronic hero in this novel?

Gothic Novel (Gothic Period: Roughly 1785-1820):

Interestingly enough, although Shelley set out to write a "ghost story" (the interest which was at least partially inspired by the fact that these writers were working in the Gothic period), this novel is less Gothic than it is Romantic and Victorian. (*Wuthering Heights*, which we will read later this year, is far more Gothic!) What makes a work Gothic is a combination of at least some of these elements. Take note of which ones are present in their truest sense in *Frankenstein*, and which ones are present, albeit modified.

- A castle, ruined or intact, haunted or not (the castle plays such a key role that it has been called the main character of the Gothic novel)
- Ruined buildings which are sinister or which arouse a pleasing melancholy
- Shadows, a beam of moonlight in the blackness, a flickering candle, or the only source of light failing
- Extreme landscapes, like rugged mountains, thick forests, or icy wastes, and extreme weather
- Omens and ancestral curses
- Magic, supernatural manifestations, or the suggestion of the supernatural
- A passion-driven, willful villain-hero or villain
- A curious heroine with a tendency to faint and a need to be rescued—frequently
- A hero whose true identity is revealed by the end of the novel
- Horrifying (or terrifying) events or the threat of such happenings.

The Gothic novel creates feelings of gloom, mystery, and suspense and tends to focus on the dramatic and the sensational. It crosses boundaries: daylight and the dark side, life and death, consciousness and unconsciousness. Sometimes covertly, sometimes explicitly, it presents transgression, taboos, and fears—fears of violation, of imprisonment, of social chaos, and of emotional collapse. Most of us immediately recognize the Gothic (even if we don't know the name) when we encounter it in novels, poetry, plays, movies, and TV series.

The Romantic Novel (Roughly 1785-1830):

- The dynamic antagonism or antithesis in the novel tends to subvert, if not to reject literary conventions; often a novel verges on turning into something else, like poetry or drama. For example, realism will be merged with fantasy and dreams.
- The protagonists' wanderings are motivated by flight from previously-chosen goals, so that often there is a pattern of escape and pursuit. Sometimes this flight/wandering is mental, sometimes it's physical.
- The protagonists are driven by irresistible passion—lust, curiosity, ambition, intellectual pride, envy. The emphasis is on their desire for transcendence, to overcome the limitations of the body, of society, of time rather than their moral transgressions. They yearn to escape the limitations inherent to life and may find that the only escape is death.
- Death is not only a literal happening or plot device, but also and primarily a psychological concern. For the protagonists, death originates in the imagination, becomes a "tendency of mind," and may develop into an obsession.
- As in Gothic fiction, buildings are central to meaning; the supernatural, wild nature, dream and madness, physical violence, and perverse sexuality are set off against social conventions and institutions.
- Endings are disquieting and unsatisfactory because the writer resists a definitive conclusion, one which accounts for all loose ends and explains away any ambiguities or uncertainties. The preference for open-endedness is, ultimately, an effort to resist the limits of time and of place. That effort helps explain the importance of dreams and memories of other times and location.

The following is taken from Norton's Website: www.wwnorton.com. What follows is much about Romantic POETRY, but the themes and ideas of Romantic novels are much the same and you will see not only people mentioned below that influenced Mary Shelley in great measure, but a number of literary qualities of *Frankenstein* listed below as well.

Writers working in the time period from 1785 to 1830 did not think of themselves as “Romantics,” but were seen to belong to a number of distinct movements or schools. For much of the twentieth century scholars singled out five poets—Wordsworth, Coleridge, Byron (inspired Shelley to write *Frankenstein*), Percy Shelley (Shelley’s husband), and Keats—and constructed a unified concept of Romanticism on the basis of their works. Some of the best regarded poets of the time were in fact women, including Anna Barbauld, Charlotte Smith, and Mary Robinson. Yet educated women were targets of masculine scorn, and the radical feminism of a figure like Mary Wollstonecraft (Mary Shelley’s mother) remained exceptional.

The Romantic period was shaped by a multitude of political, social, and economic changes. Many writers of the period were aware of a pervasive intellectual and imaginative climate, which some called “the spirit of the age.” This spirit was linked to both the politics of the French Revolution and religious apocalypticism. The early period of the French Revolution evoked enthusiastic support from English liberals and radicals alike. But support dropped off as the Revolution took an increasingly grim course. The final defeat of the French emperor Napoleon in 1815 ushered in a period of harsh, repressive measures in England. The nation’s growing population was increasingly polarized into two classes of capital and labor, rich and poor. In 1819, an assembly of workers demanding parliamentary reform was attacked by sabre-wielding troops in what became known as the “Peterloo Massacre.” A Reform Bill was passed in 1832, extending the franchise, though most men and all women remained without the vote. (These changes ushered in the Victorian period!)

Wordsworth and Coleridge’s sense of the emancipatory opportunities brought in by the new historical moment was expressed in their *Lyrical Ballads* (1798), which revolutionized the theory and practice of poetry. Wordsworth influentially located the source of a poem not in outer nature but in the psychology and emotions of the individual poet. In keeping with the view that poetry emphasizes the poet’s feelings, the lyric became a major Romantic form. It was held that the immediate act of composition must be spontaneous—arising from impulse and free from rules. For Shelley, poetry was not the product of “labor and study” but unconscious creativity. In a related tendency, Blake, Coleridge, Wordsworth, and later Shelley would all assume the persona of the poet-prophet.

Romantic poetry for present-day readers has become almost synonymous with “nature poetry.” Romantic poems habitually endow the landscape with human life, passion, and expressiveness. Wordsworth’s aim was to shatter the lethargy of custom to renew our sense of wonder in the everyday. Coleridge, by contrast, achieved wonder by the frank violation of natural laws, impressing upon readers a sense of occult powers and unknown modes of being. The pervasiveness of nature poetry in the period can be linked to the idealization of the natural scene as a site where the individual could find freedom from social laws.

Books became big business, thanks to an expanded audience and innovations in retailing. A few writers became celebrities. Although we now know the Romantic period as an age of poetry, the prose essay, the drama and the novel flourished during this epoch. This period saw the emergence of the literary critic, with accompanying anxieties over the status of criticism as literature. There was a vibrant theatrical culture, though burdened by many restrictions; Shelley’s powerful tragedy *The Cenci* was deemed unstageable on political grounds. The novel began to rival poetry for literary prestige. Gothic novelists delved into a premodern, prerational past as a means of exploring the nature of power. Jane Austen, committed like Wordsworth to finding the extraordinary in the everyday, developed a new novelistic language for the mind in flux.

Cannery Row—John Steinbeck
Summer Reading Questions
Daugherty

Read Steinbeck's Nobel Prize for Literature Acceptance Speech delivered in 1962. Awarded to him for his "realistic and imaginative writings, combining as they do sympathetic humor and keen social perception," Steinbeck's speech reveals both his character and his reasons for writing.

John Steinbeck—Nobel Prize for Literature Acceptance Speech

I thank the Swedish Academy for finding my work worthy of this highest honor. In my heart there may be doubt that I deserve the Nobel Award over other men of letters whom I hold in respect or reverence--but there is no question of my pleasure and pride in having it for myself.

It is customary for the recipient of this award to offer scholarly or personal comment on the nature and direction of literature. However, I think it would be well at this particular time to consider the high duties and responsibilities of the makers of literature.

Such is the prestige of the Nobel Award and of this place where I stand that I am impelled, not to speak like a grateful and apologetic mouse, but to roar like a lion out of pride in my profession and in the great and good men who have practiced it through the ages.

Literature was not promulgated by a pale and emasculated critical priesthood singing their litanies in empty churches--nor is it a game for the cloistered elect, the tin-horn mendicants of low-calorie despair.

Literature is as old as speech. It grew out of human need for it and it has not changed except to become more needed. The skalds, the bards, the writers are not separate and exclusive. From the beginning, their functions, their duties, their responsibilities have been decreed by our species.

Humanity has been passing through a gray and desolate time of confusion. My great predecessor, William Faulkner, speaking here, referred to it as a tragedy of universal physical fear, so long sustained that there were no longer problems of the spirit, so that only the human heart in conflict with itself seemed worth writing about. Faulkner, more than most men, was aware of human strength as well as of human weakness. He knew that the understanding and the resolution of fear are a large part of the writer's reason for being.

This is not new. The ancient commission of the writer has not changed. He is charged with exposing our many grievous faults and failures, with dredging up to the light our dark and dangerous dreams for the purpose of improvement.

Furthermore, the writer is delegated to declare and to celebrate man's proven capacity for greatness of heart and spirit--for gallantry in defeat, for courage, compassion and love. In the endless war against weakness and despair, these are the bright rally flags of hope and of emulation. I hold that a writer who does not passionately believe in the perfectibility of man has no dedication nor any membership in literature.

The present universal fear has been the result of a forward surge in our knowledge and manipulation of certain dangerous factors in the physical world. It is true that other phases of understanding have

not yet caught up with this great step, but there is no reason to presume that they cannot or will not draw abreast. Indeed, it is part of the writer's responsibility to make sure that they do. With humanity's long, proud history of standing firm against all of its natural enemies, sometimes in the face of almost certain defeat and extinction, we would be cowardly and stupid to leave the field on the eve of our greatest potential victory.

Understandably, I have been reading the life of Alfred Nobel; a solitary man, the books say, a thoughtful man. He perfected the release of explosive forces capable of creative good or of destructive evil, but lacking choice, ungoverned by conscience or judgment.

Nobel saw some of the cruel and bloody misuses of his inventions. He may have even foreseen the end result of all his probing--access to ultimate violence, to final destruction. Some say that he became cynical, but I do not believe this. I think he strove to invent a control--a safety valve. I think he found it finally only in the human mind and the human spirit.

To me, his thinking is clearly indicated in the categories of these awards. They are offered for increased and continuing knowledge of man and of his world--for understanding and communication, which are the functions of literature. And they are offered for demonstrations of the capacity for peace--the culmination of all the others.

Less than fifty years after his death, the door of nature was unlocked and we were offered the dreadful burden of choice. We have usurped many of the powers we once ascribed to God. Fearful and unprepared, we have assumed lordship over the life and death of the whole world of all living things. The danger and the glory and the choice rest finally in man. The test of his perfectibility is at hand.

Having taken God-like power, we must seek in ourselves for the responsibility and the wisdom we once prayed some deity might have. Man himself has become our greatest hazard and our only hope. So that today, saint John the Apostle may well be paraphrased: In the end is the word, and the word is man, and the word is with man.

Answer the following questions with information you have gleaned from both this speech and your additional research.

1. Choose two adjectives to describe the personality of John Steinbeck. What kind of man does he seem to be by the way that he accepts this award? Provide support for each adjective.
2. What does Steinbeck believe is the purpose of literature?
3. Steinbeck refers to "The present universal fear [that] has been the result of a forward surge in our knowledge and manipulation of certain dangerous factors in the physical world.... With humanity's long, proud history of standing firm against all of its natural enemies, sometimes in the face of almost certain defeat and extinction, we would be cowardly and stupid to leave the field on the eve of our greatest potential victory." Given that he delivered this speech in 1962, to what do you believe that he is referring? You will need to do some research here!
4. Steinbeck also alludes in his speech to his concept of religion by saying "We have usurped many of the powers we once ascribed to God. Fearful and unprepared, we have assumed lordship over the life and death of the whole world of all living things. The danger and the glory and the choice rest finally in man. The test of his perfectibility is at hand. Having taken God-like power, we must seek in ourselves for the responsibility and the wisdom we once prayed some deity might have. Man himself has become our greatest hazard and our only

hope. So that today, saint John the Apostle may well be paraphrased: In the end is the word, and the word is man, and the word is with man.”

First, paraphrase Steinbeck’s words into one sentence (or two) of your own. Second, look up Steinbeck’s concept of the “oversoul.” Define it. How can you connect the concept of the “oversoul” to Steinbeck’s understanding of his own responsibility as a writer?

And, not related to the speech:

Who was Ed Ricketts? How is he connected to *Cannery Row*? After you have learned about him and his connection to Steinbeck, consider how he is portrayed in the story. Draw 3-5 conclusions about Steinbeck’s purpose based on the research you do.

AP English—REQUIRED Summer Research Assignment

In addition to reading the two books assigned for this summer (*Frankenstein* and *Cannery Row*), you must complete the following research assignment. This assignment asks you to discover the basis, truth, and language of many of the allusions that you will find referenced throughout the course of the year in literature, poetry, and even in questions on the AP test. This assignment is well worth your time. I promise.

All of the following should be completed in your notes. Notes must be legible and organized to earn credit! **Assignment due: August 25, 2011.** Please list the sources you used in your notes as well.

The Importance of Allusions:

Almost all of classic literature is replete with allusions. Why? For much of the same reason that poets use figurative language, authors draw upon the pre-existing knowledge and understanding of their audience members in order to add another layer of depth and meaning to their work. For the classic Western Victorian, Romantic, or even Modernist audience, these allusions needed no explanation; part of education was an exposure to Christianity and the Bible, and to mythology. However, education has moved away from both of these classic foundations, presenting an entirely new set of challenges to today's contemporary audience members. Does it matter? Yes. For two reasons: 1. An uninformed contemporary audience misses some of the true depth of the work as the author intended it, and 2. These types of questions show up on the AP test, and without exposure to the Bible and Greek mythology, these questions will be missed. How well do you need to know allusions? For all intents and purposes, well enough to recognize them. This research assignment is going to give you a start on this "allusion toolbox." We'll be contributing to this "toolbox" all year and it will be a valuable tool as we dissect literature and prepare for the AP test.

Biblical Allusions:

As I said before, the classic Western audience was primarily Christian and was exceedingly well-educated about the Bible. On this assignment, and for the purpose of this class, we will look at the Bible as a literary document. Read the assigned stories (many of them are called "parables") that create the foundation of Christianity—they are among the most referenced in the classic literature we will read. Read them in the same way that you read the Greek Myths. And above all, get a feel for biblical language. Because I cannot possibly assign all of the biblical allusions to you for study this summer, the best thing that you can do to prepare yourself to recognize and identify these biblical allusions when they appear in the literature we read (and in subtle references on the AP test), is to become familiar with the way the Bible *sounds* (which is actually more important in the study of literature than what it *says*) as well as with some of the most well-known stories and lines. So, although you can find all sorts of ways to actually summarize these sections, it really is more about getting a feel for the language, and the best thing you can do is actually read the stories that are listed below.

For each of the following, please provide 3-5 details that will define or summarize the story, myth, location, or character.

The Book of Genesis—

- The Creation story (Chapter 1)
- The story of Cain and Abel (Chapter 4)

The Books of Matthew and Luke—The book of Matthew is the story of Jesus’s life. Luke continues to tell the stories of Jesus. Many of the biblical allusions in literature come especially from the Sermon on the Mount and from Jesus’s parables—so read these sections, in particular, very carefully.

- The birth of Jesus, the story of the wise man, the star (a recurring literary symbol), and the role of King Herod (Matthew 1 and 2)
- John the Baptist—Know who he was, what he did, and how he died (Matthew 3)
- The temptation of Christ—Where was he? Who tempted him? For how long?
- Look up the role of fishermen in the Bible. How are they symbolic? What are “fishers of men”?
- The Sermon on the Mount and the Beatitudes. You should have a few more details here. (Matthew 5)
- Jesus’s teaching and lessons (often called parables)—Throughout Matthew and Luke
 - Casting of stones
 - The lilies of the field
 - The loaves and the fishes
 - The prodigal son
 - The mustard seed
 - Speck of sawdust vs. Plank of wood
- The conspiracy against Jesus and the role of Judas; The Garden of Gethsemane. You should have a few more details here—include denying 3 times. (Matthew 26)
- The crucifixion and the resurrection (Matthew 27-28)

Mythological Allusions:

In addition to a wide knowledge base about Christianity, readers and writers of classic texts also had tremendous background knowledge of Greek and Roman Mythology. The following stories and characters will help you to lay a good foundation in Greek and Roman Mythology. Again, you may think that you know these stories. But if you haven’t studied them recently (within the last year), be sure that you go and look them up.

For each of the following, please provide 3-5 details that will define or summarize the myth, location, or the character.

- The myth of Daedalus and Icarus
- The myth of Sisyphus
- The myth of Hercules
- The Fates, The Furies, The Muses, The Graces, and The Sirens
- The Myth of Prometheus
- The Myth of Persephone
- The gods: Apollo, Aphrodite, Athena, Dionysus, Hades, Hera, Hermes, Poseidon, Zeus
- Chaos
- The Titans
- Mount Olympus
- The geography of the Underworld (this will need to be more detailed): Especially the rivers—and the means by which the rivers were crossed
- Shades

Note: An alternative assignment is available upon request. Please let me know BEFORE you leave for break if you would like the alternative assignment instead.