

Honors Junior English

Summer Reading Requirements

2011-2012 School Year

English 11 Honors is a challenging but rewarding class. A solid work ethic and proficient level of reading and writing skills are essential requirements to be successful in this course. The course will not only prepare you for English 12 Advanced Placement, but it is also designed to build upon the foundation established in English 9 Honors and 10 Honors.

American literature will be the literary focus of English 11 Honors and will be presented through a chronological approach. The major works include Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter*, Melville's "Bartleby the Scrivener," Twain's *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, Dreiser's *Sister Carrie*, Chopin's *The Awakening*, Faulkner's *Sound and the Fury*, Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*, and Miller's *Death of a Salesman*.

The summer reading assignments for English 11 Honors, in addition to the selection of literature throughout the year, are determined by curriculum requirements and expectations of English 12 AP. **If you and/or your parents have any concerns regarding the subjects addressed in these works, please notify me immediately.**

You will be required to read **two** American novels this summer. Each work must be read **before** the first day of school in August. You will be assessed on each novel the first week of school.

The first required reading assignment is **Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter***. You may either purchase this novel on your own or borrow the book from the English Department. Please read and take notes on this work thoroughly using the attached reading guide (the study guide is optional, but I would highly encourage you to use it as you read the text). Focus on the plot, setting, and character development, as well as your ideas on thematic elements regarding reoccurring symbols and motifs. The assessment for this novel will be given **Friday, August 26**—you should expect a multiple choice format.

The second required reading assignment is **Bernard Malamud's *The Natural***. You must purchase this novel on your own. *The Natural* will be assessed in three ways: a literary reading guide, a literary analysis, and a multiple choice test. Be prepared to submit the **literary reading guide** the first day of school **Thursday, August 25**. Using the details and observations that you've composed on this guide, you will be assigned a **literary analysis Monday, August 29** which will be due the following week. The **multiple choice test** will be given **Friday, August 26**.

Instructor: Ms Stephanie Bogart
Email: bogart.stephanie@rrcs.org

Summer Reading Guide for Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter*



The Scarlet Letter follows the public shaming and punishment of a young woman named Hester Prynne in mid-17th century Boston. Hawthorne published the novel in 1850—roughly two hundred years after the story would have taken place. It will be important to keep this in mind as we delve deeper into the textual themes of the novel.

Although Hawthorne's language and writing style are challenging, it is imperative that you read closely for details regarding character, setting, and symbol. Although optional, following this reading guide will ensure that you read for the ideas and concepts you'll need for the assessment in the fall.

I. Characterization

As you read the novel, pay close attention to the details Hawthorne provides on his characters. When you finish the novel, you should be comfortable discussing each character's specific behaviors and personality.

What words can be used to best describe the character? Does the character's personality change throughout the novel? If so, in what ways do they change, and what significant event ignites this change? What are your personal feelings towards the character?

Major Characters: Hester Prynne, Pearl, Roger Chillingworth, Reverend Arthur Dimmesdale
Minor Characters: Governor Bellingham, Reverend John Wilson, Mistress Hibbins

II. Setting

Pay particular attention to the setting in which Hawthorne places each of his characters. Notice particular settings that seem to be repeated.

What is the setting (time and place) of the novel? How does the setting aid in the development of the characters? Which settings seem to have *symbolic* significance and why?

III. Symbol

There are numerous symbols throughout *The Scarlet Letter*. Be prepared to explain each symbol's meaning and its significance to the work as a whole.

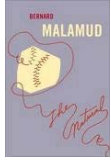
Symbols to be aware of:

colors	the rose	reflections	the letter "A"
darkness/light	weeds	the Puritan garments	
the forest	the scaffold	the red stigma	

IV. Irony, Foreshadowing, Theme

Can you identify passages of situational and dramatic irony within the novel? What lines could be labeled as foreshadowing future events? What is the theme of the novel? (Remember that theme should be written as a sentence!)

Summer Reading Guide for Malamud's *The Natural*



In Malamud's *The Natural* readers will follow baseball player Roy Hobbs as he strives to become "the best [baseball player] there ever was in the game." In the novel Malamud explores the role of the modern day hero and the moral responsibilities that come with the quest for success through fame.

As you read the novel, begin to note passages that support and explain the following literary concepts. Your essay in the fall will be a culmination of these concepts.

I. Naturalism in American Literature

"Naturalism" embodies a period in American literary history that began around 1900 and ended with the outbreak of World War I in 1914. Naturalists sought to apply the scientific method to the study of humanity, using a case-study approach in literary works and portraying characters and situations objectively without commenting on morality or fairness

Traits of Naturalism

1. A character's life is dictated by heredity and the external environment. Characters **do not** operate under *free will*.
 - a. **determinism:** the belief that every behavior, thought, and action is determined by a chain of prior events (causality); the present state is an effect of the previous state and causes the state to follow
 - b. **fatalism:** the belief that humans are powerless and that events happen that are not based on the choices made
2. Authors often focus on the poor or the fallen with an emphasis on Social Darwinism.
 - a. **Social Darwinism:** derived from Charles Darwin's theory of evolution by natural selection and Herbert Spencer's concept of survival of the fittest; the belief that competition between groups of people drives evolution and societal prosperity
3. Much like a scientist, the narrator is often objective, detailed, and detached. There is no commentary on the morality or fairness of the situation of the characters.

II. The Antihero

An antihero is a protagonist who does not exhibit the qualities of the traditional hero. Instead of being an admirable figure, an antihero is all too ordinary and may even be petty or a criminal.

Traits of an Antihero

1. A protagonist with a human frailty or flaw.
2. Disillusioned with society
3. Seeks for redemption or revenge for his own satisfaction
4. Doesn't always think about what is morally right—instead thinks about what is right for him
5. Is misunderstood by others in society
6. His noble motives are pursued by breaking the law
7. Rejects traditional values of the society

III. Symbol

A symbol is a person, place, object, or idea that stands for something beyond its literal meaning. Symbols in *The Natural* include: light and dark, red, water, three, food, train, wonderboy, birds.

Name: _____

***The Natural* Reading Guide**

“Without heroes we’re all plain people and don’t know how far we can go.” –*The Natural*

Directions: Answer the following questions using **specific examples** and **page numbers** from the text. You need a **minimum of three examples** from the text for each question. Keep in mind that this guide will aid in the composition of your literary analysis in the fall—details and critical literary observations are incredibly important! Responses should be written in paragraph form.

While I welcome you to discuss the novel with your peers, this guide is to be completed **independently**. There will be severe penalties for simply copying a peer’s work—I want to see what YOU know.

I. Naturalism

In what ways is Roy Hobbs influenced by a lack of free will? What are the specific external forces that lead to his successes and failures? Please include page numbers.

Was Roy ruled more by fatalism or determinism? Explain.

II. The Antihero

What is Roy Hobbs' tragic flaw and how do you know?

Using the traits of an antihero provided in your Summer Reading pamphlet, identify specific examples of Roy's antihero qualities. Try to find an example for each of the traits listed on the Summer Reading pamphlet and include page numbers where applicable.

III. Symbol

Symbol	Page References	Explanation of Symbol's Meaning/ Purpose
Light		
Dark		
Red		
Water		
Three		
Food		
Train		
Wonderboy		
Birds		

IV. Theme

Theme is the universal message that an author works to communicate in his/her work. What do you think Malamud intended for the theme of *The Natural* to be?

Write at least 3 potential novel themes in the space below. Remember to avoid clichés, state the theme universally, and express theme as a sentence.

V. Passage Analysis

The lady in the stands hesitantly rose for the second time. A photographer who had stationed himself nearby snapped a clear shot of her. She was an attractive woman, around thirty, maybe more, and built solid but not too big. Her bosom was neat, and her dark hair, parted on the side, hung loose and soft. A reporter approached her and asked her name but she wouldn't give it to him, nor would she, blushing, say why she was standing now. The fans behind her hooted, "Down in front," but though her eyes showed she was troubled she remained standing.

Noticing Toomey was watching her, Roy stole a quick look. He caught the red dress and a white rose, turned away, then came quickly back for another take, drawn by the feeling that her smile was for him. Now why would she do that for? She seemed to be wanting to say something, and then it flashed on him the reason she was standing was to show her confidence in him. He felt surprised that anybody would want to do that for him. At the same time he became aware that the night had spread out in all directions and was filled with an unbelievable fragrance.

1. In the first paragraph, why is the woman "blushing"?
2. What is a plausible reason for having the woman dressed in red and white?
3. What is the purpose of the "unbelievable fragrance"? How can the "night spread out in all directions"?
4. What does the woman's description in the first paragraph indicate about the woman's appearance and personality? Which particular words prove these claims?
5. What does Roy's reaction to the woman standing indicate about his personality and character?
6. What is Malamud's purpose in this passage? If part of his purpose is to foreshadow, how does he achieve that end?
7. What is the tone of the passage, and how do you know?