Dear AP English Literature Students of 2019-2020,

I’m wholeheartedly looking forward to the upcoming school year. I am sure that all of you have worked extremely hard in all of your English classes; believe me, you have been prepared by those teachers so that you are ready to take the next challenge called AP English Literature/Composition. This course is challenging, rewarding, exciting, emotional, stressful, relaxing, and, most importantly, educational. You will take from this course what you put into it. I have complete faith you will walk out of this course in May of 2020 with an immense amount of knowledge and a full preparation for college.

I am enclosing materials for you to complete this summer. In order for you to truly enjoy *Crime and Punishment* and *Oryx and Crake,* you must be able to understand them. I suggest you read these novels very slowly and highlight and/or underline passages and take notes and/or periodically write summaries in the margins as you are reading. Also, you may need to make a character list and briefly write his or her action(s), behavior, and/or personality as you read. Characters are vital to the understanding of these novels. I have enclosed an annotation guide that may help you enhance your annotating skills. I highly suggest you read through this in order to become much better at annotating. Do not read these novels just for plot; understand what makes these novels, stylistically, masterpieces of literature.

Once again, I’m excited about this upcoming year. Please understand this is going to be a very memorable year for you. Have a great summer! Live life to the fullest, be safe, and continue to learn! If you have any questions during the summer, please e-mail me at James.Fleenor @cobbk12.org. I will also use Edmodo; you should know how to sign up for it under AP English Literature. I’ll set up Edmodo for AP English Literature 2019-2020 in late May or early June just in case you want to ask me questions and/or just sign on the blog so you don’t have to do it at the beginning of the school year. See you in August.

Sincerely,

J. Greg Fleenor

P. S. Bring your copy of *Elements of Style* to class on day one. We will be working with it during the first week.

# Reading the Texts

Summer reading is **not** simply a means to inspire mental alertness during the summer months; it is rather the foundation of our course and should be approached as such. The bulk of our study during the first semester will address the texts that you will read this summer, and because all great literature demands multiple readings, you will be expected to read the texts again after school begins if you haven’t fully grasped concepts found within the works. You will be tested very early in the school year. **If you do not plan to complete the summer reading, do not take this course.**

As you read, consider the nature and significance of each of the following elements of the novel:

* Setting
* Plot
* Characterization
* Symbolism
* Imagery
* Irony

Allow these questions to guide your reading of each of the texts:

* What are the central purposes of themes of the texts? How are the specific circumstances of the characters related to the author’s perceptions of the human condition? What philosophical stances does the author take upon the human condition? What is the writer’s motivation to compose this work?
* What principles of literature guide and inform the craft of the writer?
* What is the central conflict in the work? Is the conflict internal or external? How is the conflict developed? How does the conflict drive the plot of the work? How do the characters’ traits influence the conflict? How is the conflict resolved?
* Is the action of the novel primarily social or psychological? How does the nature of the action relate to other aspects of the novel?
* What role do the secondary characters play in the development of the work’s meaning?
* In the case of novels, explain how the author presents the consciousness of the characters. How does the author use his or her narrative techniques to convey the novel’s meaning? What are the author’s attitudes toward the characters?
* How does the author handle the element of time?
* What motifs are relevant to development of the work’s themes?
* How is the beginning of the work significant? The end?

As you read Cri*me and Punishment* and *Oryx and Crake,* examine what themes, structures, and motifs unify the works.

# Annotation – A Multi-modal Approach to Close Reading

Annotate – v. To furnish (a literary work) with critical commentary or explanatory notes [ LATIN *ad* near + *nota* a mark, note]

**Rationale for Annotation:**

Reading, listening, and writing coalesce in the process of annotation; annotation offers a multi-modal approach to literature study. In short, annotation means “adding useful notes” to a text. Annotating your text is like having a conversation with it. As you read, engage the text by asking questions, commenting on meaning, marking events and passages you want to revisit, and identifying and more deeply appreciating the craft of the author and the tools the author employs to achieve any number of desired effects. This active engagement with the text will allow you to comprehend and remember more of what you read, and it will allow you to refer to specifics within the story with greater ease.

The annotation of a text can and should take place during a discussion that is focused on a certain textual passage. Taking notes in your book on the teacher’s (or a peer’s) remarks expressed during class has a marked advantage – you won’t misplace the notes, and the ideas will be readily available next to the text they address (as suggested by the etymology of the word, you would write notes or mark your book near the part of the text that induces such annotation). Do not neglect your own in-class comments and observations – as sometimes happens – record them right away!

This skill of book-marking results in active reading. You may even come to enjoy the “hunt.” The skill provides immediate assistance in talking and writing in class about the book; it also provides long-term benefits in writing outside of class and in preparing for tests and exams. Time invested annotating your book is time well spent. A deliberately and carefully annotated book affords a swift reprise of its salient features. Indeed, proper annotations produce a cascade of recollections and informed ideas. Ideas for papers and possible essay questions emerge from good annotation.

**The Process:**

There are a number of procedural expectations that make annotation practical and effective. First, implement a consistent system. Use the same abbreviations and symbols every time you annotate. Second, have a pencil or pen with you to make annotations. Third, be disciplined.

**Some suggested ABBREVIATIONS/SYMBOLS:**

b/c = because PLOT = plot item (and/or using one of the

**+ =** and following)

w/ = with EXP = exposition

w/o = without TP = turning point

b/t = between CF = conflict

e.g. = for example RA = rising action

ex = example CX = climax

info = information FA = falling action

b4 = before RES = resolution

\* = important Ch = characterization

\*\* = very important S = setting

\*\*\*\* = of the utmost importance POV = point of view (mention type)

> = use caret to point to exact location Th = theme

^ = change LT = literary term (identify term by name)

? = I don’t understand

**Additional Annotation Strategies:**

Tracking nouns – important people, places, things, and ideas: Put a box around the name (or nominal if the character/setting/object is unnamed) of [1] a character the first time you encounter the character, [2] a place (or other aspect of the setting) whenever it seems important or relevant, and [3] an object when it seems crucial to the story. “Rebox” a character/setting/object whenever he/she/it returns to the text after a long absence. Track important people, places, things, and ideas by supplying page numbers whenever possible that point to previous encounters. Cross reference all of this tracking/tracing by also writing page numbers at the spot of the earlier instances of people, places, things, and ideas. Write brief comments whenever possible to make these connections clear and to note any evolution or development. On the inside cover of the book, keep a list of the characters you encounter, the page on which they first appear, and a very brief description of each. You may need to add to or modify these descriptions as the story unfolds. In this way, you will develop a comprehensive list of characters. Keep track of important aspects of the setting and important objects in a similar manner. Do the same for ideas. Keep track of themes (motifs) by noting them as they are perceived and by tracing their development.

**Chapter summaries/titles:** At the end of each chapter, write a brief summary of the plot as it occurred in that chapter. This does not have to be long or greatly detailed, but you should include all relevant incidents. Use plot-related abbreviations whenever possible in your summary. Supply an instructive title for each chapter of the book. This may prove useful for books in which chapters are already titled. This practice will help you solidify your understanding of a chapter in just a few of your own words.

**Underlining:** Within the text of the book, underline or otherwise note anything that strikes you as important, significant, memorable, etc. If possible and profitable, write brief comments within the side margins that indicate your motivation in underlining. Focus on the essential elements of literature (plot, setting, characterization, point of view and theme) and any other aspects of literature study that you deem worthwhile and/or appropriate. You need not underline every word. Often, I underline isolated words and phrases. Occasionally, I connect such underlinings with a line, in essence creating a new sentence, a distillation of ideas or meaning.

**Vertical bars:** Use vertical bars and double vertical bars together with abbreviations and symbols to indicate passages that contain important themes, wonderfully nuanced descriptions, especially delightful phrasing and/ or syntax, provocative assertions, figurative language, etc. And, of course, write comments and analytical snippets to clarify your thinking.

**Vocabulary/unusual diction:** Within the text of the book, circle words that are unfamiliar to you or whose use strikes you as unusual or inventive. Look up words in a dictionary that seem essential to an understanding of the meaning or the sense of the author. If it helps to do so, jot a brief definition or synonym nearby.

**Questioning:** Actively engage the text and further/confirm your understanding of each chapter by writing at least two open-ended questions for each. Short essay questions are most useful.

**Shifts:** Note all shifts in point of view. Note all shifts in time. Note all shifts in diction and syntax.

**Final Thoughts on Annotation:**

You are expected to think critically about what you are reading. While the amount of annotation may vary widely from page to page, any notes you add to a text will help you to read more critically – any attempt to annotate your book will help you to understand the work as you read – and, as this handout has made clear, will help you return to the reading with confidence later.

Annotation is a discrete skill, and like any skill, it takes significant practice to hone your ability to the point of acquiring expertise. Therefore, start writing in your books NOW! **Your books will be checked for annotations when you return to school in August.**

**AP Literature Summer Reading Assignments 2019**

**For *Crime and Punishment*,** research and know the following historical figures and philosophies before you begin reading *Crime and Punishment.* Know these items well enough in order to recognize them and annotate in your novel as they appear. Know these before you start reading. Annotate in your novel where these historical figures and philosophies occur. You will be expected to point out where these historical figures and philosophies are in the novel once you return to school.

* Solipsism
* Altruism
* Nihilism
* Objectivism
* Realism
* Naturalism
* Determinism (socioeconomic and biological)
* Existentialism
* Rationalism
* Nietzsche
* Freud
* Marx
* Cultural relativism
* Historicism
* Communism
* Capitalism
* Utilitarianism
* Egoism

**Suggested Reading Order**

*Crime and Punishment*

This novel will take you the longest time to read due to length, twisting plot, and psychological nature. The latest you should start this novel is the last week of June or the first week of July. We will begin discussing and studying this novel at the beginning of the second week of school. You must also remember that you have to research briefly for this novel during the summer also.

*Oryx and Crake*

If you believe you can read this dystopian novel within two weeks, you may begin reading when school starts. We will begin discussing this novel at the beginning of the third week of school. Please be advised that this is a uniquely enjoyable novel; allow yourself to enjoy the strange imagery and ponder what Atwood is saying from a societal standpoint.

**Collee Essay Pre-Writing Assignment**

This assignment is geared toward assisting you to gain insight and explore your inner **STRENGTHS and TALENTS**, which is a key component to beginning the college application process.

The College Essay Pre-Writing Assignment will consist of **TWO** parts:

1. Completing the Strengths Explorer in Naviance
2. Completing the College Application Packet on the Counseling website where you will write about your top three STRENGTHS AND TALENTS, which you discovered about yourself

**Please FOLLOW THE INSTRUCTIONS BELOW to complete both assignments.**

* Log into your Naviance account. Your username is your student number, and your password is your 6 digit birth date (example, June 1, 2000 would be 06/01/00)

Go to the “About Me” tab, and complete the **STRENGTHS EXPLORER** under “My Assessments.”

* **Complete** the College Application Packet found on right hand side of the main page of the[**school counseling website**](http://donnadunham.wixsite.com/waltoncounseling)**.**
* **This packet must be typed, printed, and turned in to your Senior English Teacher in order to receive credit for your summer reading assignment.**
* Be sure to **SAVE** this packet to your computer! If you need letters of recommendation from your School Counselor and/or teacher(s), you will need to give a copy to EACH recommender at least **THREE FULL WEEKS BEFORE** your first college deadline.
* Fill out the “COLLEGES TO WHICH YOU ARE APPLYING” page to the best of your ability. As you make changes, please notify your School Counselor and your teacher(s) who are completing your recommendation.
* For question 5, you will need to complete the **Strengths Explorer** in Naviance, outlined above. Have a parent/guardian complete the last page of the packet.

**Note:** Your recommenders will be using this packet to write YOUR letters of recommendation. The more time, thought, and insight you spend on your responses, the more details your recommenders can include in their letters.