

Humanities English Section – Summer Reading Assignment for '17-'18

READ EVERY WORD OF THESE DIRECTIONS CAREFULLY.

1. Read *Tale of Two Cities* by Charles Dickens **AND** *Genesis* by Bernard Beckett.
2. You will write TWO well-supported essays – one for each of the books. [MLA Format]
3. The topics of your essays shall be the following:
 - How are human lives shaped by the tension/conflict between the individual and her/his society in *A Tale of Two Cities*?
 - Are beings more than the sum of their ideas; and how do ideas generate, evolve, and persist in *Genesis*?
4. You must craft from each topic a thesis statement of your own devising. A thesis is an “argument requiring proof,” not a statement of fact, question, or plot point.
5. Use plenty of quotes, at least one very substantial quote per body paragraph: prove and discuss any/all assertions you make in each essay.
6. Your papers are due on the first day of class. Late papers will be accepted no later than the very next calendar day, and they will receive a 20 point deduction. **I will not accept papers after this.**
7. Your essays must be typed and in MLA format. Each must have a clear and concise introduction, a well-structured original thesis, body paragraphs that clearly support the thesis, ample cited quotes for support throughout the essay, and a clear and organized conclusion. These essays will be scrupulously and rigorously corrected and graded, so **be sure to edit/revise the essay thoroughly before submission. Allow no silly mistakes. Read aloud as part of your revision process.** I expect thoroughly readable, sensible, grammatically-correct, and logical work. The essays must be double-spaced, in Times New Roman size 12 font, with one inch margins.

This is literary analysis, not a book report!

Please use *references* to plot (through quotes) to prove ideas; do not recount plot. Please do not evaluate or rate the book's overall quality. Do not use contractions. Do not use first or second personal pronouns (I, me, my, mine, we, us, our, ours, you, your, yours). Do not use mechanical phrasing (First, Second, In conclusion, This quote says, At the beginning of the book, the author is saying that, etc.) or colloquial expressions. Do not begin sentences with coordinating conjunctions (And, But, Or, etc.) Exclude all run-on sentences and fragments. Check for singular/plural agreement.

PRE-OUTLINE. Do not make assumptions. Be not wordy nor repetitive. Take a stance, state it clearly, and prove it logically/soundly. Show evidence for every argument/assertion that you make in the essay.

This work is your “first impression”: make it extraordinary. Papers are test grades counted twice in my class. Bear this in mind as you are crafting this fine piece of writing. Be forewarned: I am fanatical about proper grammar usage and careful, consistent, logical argumentation.

Additionally, read the books early enough to have time to enjoy them, but not so early that you will not recall details when school begins. I reserve the right to test/quiz.

Have a great summer! -- Mr. O'Brien
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