

## Humanities English Section – Summer Reading Assignment for '16-17'

### READ EVERY WORD OF THESE DIRECTIONS THOROUGHLY AND 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:
  - Individual rights versus tradition and/or mob rule in *A Tale of Two Cities*
  - The power and persistence of an idea in *Genesis*
4. You must craft the topics into thesis statements of your own devising. A thesis is an “argument requiring proof,” not a statement of fact or a plot point.
5. Use plenty of quotes: prove 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 **sure to edit/revise the essay thoroughly before submission.** 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 ever use first or second personal pronouns (I, me, my, mine, we, our, us, ours, you, your, yours). Do not use mechanical phrasing (First, Second, In conclusion, This quote says, etc.) or colloquial expressions. Do not begin sentences with coordinating conjunctions (And, But, Or, etc.) Do not end sentences with prepositions (in, on, out, with, off, to, from, etc.) Exclude all run-on sentences and fragments. Check for singular/plural agreement.

Do not make assumptions. Do not be wordy. Do not repeat yourself. Take a stance, state it clearly, and prove it logically and 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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