

Harper
Lee's

TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD



Pre-AP English II (10th grade)

Summer Reading Assignment

Mrs. Besch

The Pre-AP English II class is designed to prepare you for continued success in Pre-AP and AP English classes. Not only will you engage in a year of extensive advanced studies to prepare for college-level work by the end of your sophomore year, but you will also have the privilege of examining some of the world's great literature. In addition to literature, you will intensely study grammar and writing.

Part 1

Reading Assignment

To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee

You can purchase this book in most bookstores, as well as online at www.amazon.com, www.BarnesandNoble.com, etc., or check it out from your local library.

1. Read this book, *slowly and thoughtfully*; do not read it the night before school begins. Take weeks to read and digest it. It takes place in Alabama, a lot of it during the summer, so try reading under a nice oak tree. (Set your phone aside and enjoy lemonade or sweet tea!)
2. You *must* prepare a dialectal journal. This will be easier to do if you complete

this as you read. Have fun with creating this journal; make it your own as you record your thoughts as you read. Use your creativity. You must have one response per chapter. Please do not panic, as there are thirty-one chapters. Your response is open to your interpretation. You may write a response, or you may draw. You may also write a poem or the lyrics to a song in response to your reading. Again, have fun with this project.

Part 2

Writing Assignment:

- Choose one of the major themes in the novel. Identify and discuss the theme in the novel and connect it to a contemporary issue or a personal experience. For example: What does Lee say about racism, and how are her thoughts relevant to today's world? Type a **minimum of 500 words** about your chosen theme using the writing format below.

Writing Format:

- The first paragraph is your introduction. This paragraph introduces the main idea of what you wish to say and **MUST INCLUDE YOUR THESIS STATEMENT**. Also, you should capture your reader's attention in this paragraph. You must always write for your reader, whether the reader is your teacher, your employer, or any other audience. The first paragraph grabs the reader's interest in your topic, gives background on it, and leads your reader to the main idea you want him or her to take from your paper. Please notice the words "grab the reader's attention." Your first two sentences should make me want to read this paper, *not dread it*. Use imagery, dialogue, definition - basically, use your voice to make your introduction interesting and exciting. In other words, **do not** write "The thesis of my paper is...". You may write it before or after you write the main body of your essay. You may write a rough introduction first and then revise it after the rest of your essay is finished. Most introduction paragraphs contain four to eight sentences, and the last sentence

will lead into your second paragraph.

- The body of your essay consists of at least three paragraphs. Each paragraph will contain a main idea supporting what you have written in your thesis statement in the first paragraph, and each paragraph will have a separate main idea. In these paragraphs you provide the details that lead you to form your thesis. Must include quotes from the novel and use correct in-text citations (MLA format). The last sentence of each paragraph will end with a sentence which brings the main idea of the paragraph to a close and leads into the next paragraph.

- The conclusion of your essay is in the final paragraph. Its purpose is to wrap up the main idea, or thesis, of the essay. This paragraph will not introduce any new ideas. Instead, you will restate your thesis and summarize what you have written, but in different words. Your conclusion will emphasize the significance of the thesis statement, complete the essay, and leave a final impression on your reader.

- Use MLA format. If you do not know MLA format, it is your responsibility to research MLA formatting. A great website for this is The Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL). I will automatically deduct 10 points from any paper not in MLA format under “conventions” on the rubric. Any papers proving to be copied / pasted from online sources or other students will result in the student’s dismissal from Pre-Ap. I am attaching a quick overview of MLA with this assignment.

- Make sure your quote supports your point; explain how it does so without saying “This quote proves that...” or “This quote means that ...” Help the reader see the connection without being quite so obvious.

- Do not use second person (You, Your.) This includes imperative sentences with implied ‘you’ as the subject.

- **Absolutely do not use the first person** (I, me, my). Do not use “I think,” “In my opinion,” and so on. I know it is your work and therefore your opinions.
- Proofread for spelling, commas, comma splices, run-ons, and so on. • Make sure that all sentences and paragraphs flow smoothly into each other (use transitions).
- Your paper and dialectical notebooks are due on the first day of school.
- **DO NOT WORK AS A GROUP! YOU MUST WORK ON YOUR OWN. IF I FIND YOU HAVE WORKED TOGETHER, I WILL CONSIDER THIS CHEATING, AND YOU WILL RECEIVE A ZERO.**
- If you have any questions, please contact me at my school email sbesch@ricecisd.org; I check my email regularly.

Theme:

The theme of a story is the story’s main idea. The theme of a fable is its moral. The theme of a parable would be the lesson it teaches. The theme of a novel is what it tells us about life and the ways people behave. You are not told directly in the novel, “This is the theme of this book,” or “This is what I, the author, want you to understand when you read my book.” You must figure out for yourself what the theme is by looking at the characters, what they do and say, and what happens in the book. The theme is the truth the author wishes to show. Most books have more than one theme. Choose one for your paper.

In *To Kill a Mockingbird*, there *are* many themes upon which you could base a paper. There is the theme of stereotypes in which the nature of stereotypes is explored, whether racial, social, or gender based. There is the theme of what a hero is and how courage works in the lives of Atticus, Scout, and Tom Robinson. There is the theme of

family. What is a family? How do single parents raise children? How are children initiated into the adult world? There is the theme of how children can sometimes form a bridge between social classes and races or between perceived insiders and outsiders. There is the theme of violence and different ways of dealing with it.

To Kill a Mockingbird is also a novel about the growth and development of a child. In the book, Scout, Jem, and Dill grow from one stage of life into a new and more adult state by being confronted with some harsh realities of their world. They see things that are hard to witness, but by doing so they mature and gain better judgment. The novel is a “rite of passage” book, or bildungsroman (German, for “a novel of development”). Robbins, M.A., Mari Lu A Guide for Using *To Kill a Mockingbird* in the Classroom. Teacher Created Materials, Inc., 1999.

Summary of Assignments

Essay – turn in one hardcopy; no late work accepted!

Dialectical journal – turn in one hardcopy; no late work accepted!

NO LATE WORK IS ACCEPTED under any circumstances! **NO EXCEPTIONS!** If you do not have your summer assignments completed, you will have your schedule changed to a regular English class.

If you plagiarize the essay, you will immediately be removed from Pre-AP.