June 2019

Dear Super Senior Scholar (since that’s what you are!):

It is with great pleasure that I pass along this and some materials – including our first read, the play *Waiting For Godot* by Samuel Beckett -- to welcome you to next year’s AP Literature & Composition class, or as I prefer to call it, “Literature Geekdom.” You can look forward to a year of close reading and introspection; intensive writing and analysis, and the ability to discuss and even present to your peers your views on a full range of literature, including classic and contemporary novels, prose, poetry, short stories and plays. Our goals in English IV AP Literature & Composition truly follow the core words in the title of the course; focusing on literature, looking at author purpose and how this purpose is manifested through the use of literary devices, and writing about this in sophisticated, original, analytical and cohesive prose. In addition, the class will also encompass the instruction and activities you have become familiar with and have enjoyed over your Language Arts career here at Mount Olive High School: grammar/language skills; vocabulary work; research; multi-media projects and even creative writing.

The AP Literature & Composition Summer Reading Assignment has been designed to not only get you acquainted with the course, but also to allow you to delve into the level of work that is to come. And as something new and exciting, the plan now is to get together this summer (whether virtually or in person, most probably in August, with details tba), so we can begin our learning, and go over these materials prior to September. To that end, not only am I handing you these materials and a book during our AP Lit intro meeting prior to the end of the 2018 – 2019 school year, but I will post these in a temporary Summer AP Lit Google classroom, called AP Lit & Comp Summer Scholars 2019, class code: u6y1e0 (lower case “u,” six, lower case “y,” one, lower case “e,” and zero). Join classroom and be sure to check in weekly beginning in July so you can know about deadlines, due dates and meetings that will help set up this course.

While all enduring literature thematically touches on the Human Condition – what we read here also connects to culture, context, philosophy and history. Our books, plays, and poems must be read and analyzed knowing where they and their authors fit in the continuum of life and societal challenges. As we approach each text, we will ask ourselves the following Essential Questions (and other thematic, stylistic ones):
What world events are happening as this is being written?
To what extent has the author – and his/her purpose in writing this – been affected by the history and culture around him/her?
What philosophical movements have arisen during this time frame, and how is this mirrored in the literature?

Some of our readings, discussion and analysis will connect with your history classes, especially AP European History. As for your Summer Assignment, the play *Waiting For Godot*, a classic work of Twentieth Century drama first written in French and translated into languages from all over the globe, showcases a theme has been interpreted as man’s search for the meaning of life. Its Existentialist overview – a philosophy also at the heart of European movements post-WWII and the AP Euro class – is compelling, complex and sometimes seemingly ridiculous. This play also ushered in an artistic movement called Theatre of the Absurd, and you will be researching the playwright, this, and Existentialism as part of your Summer Assignment.

Know that this play and its accompanying materials are just the beginning of a literary journey that will take you through many other literary works. These may include other works such as *The Great Gatsby*, *Death of a Salesman*, *A Streetcar Named Desire*, *One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest*, *Things Fall Apart*, *Slaughterhouse-five* and selections from *Welcome to the Monkey House*, *Taming of the Shrew*, *The Scarlet Letter*, *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, *Ethan Frome*, *As I Lay Dying*, *Wuthering Heights*, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, *Mrs. Dalloway*, *The Hours*, *Hamlet*, *Snow Falling on Cedars*, and *The Kiterunner*. The class usually reads – and writes on! – some 14+ books, along with scores of short stories and hundreds of poems ranging from classic to contemporary pieces.

Your full multi-part Summer Assignment consists of:

1. First reading and responding to a poem (attached here) entitled “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock,” by English writer TS Eliot. You will read, annotate, and then fill in a TP-CASTT sheet (attached at end of this missive) for the poem. Look at each letter and category on the sheet and use them to “walk” through the poem.
2. Then, you need to Shmoop BEFORE YOU READ the play (be sure you have an account before you leave the building this year, as you don’t just Google Schmoop, but use our databases under the library tab on the school website for indepth access, and use the magic word EXPLAIN) and research several topics of interest and take notes. Look up the playwright, Samuel Beckett; the play *Waiting for Godot* itself; Theatre of the Absurd (links can be found when looking up the play) and Existentialism. Reflect on all of this – and keep this in mind when you finally sit down and read.
3. But before you read, go to YouTube and watch clips of the play. My favorites are from a Broadway production a few years back starring Sir Patrick Stewart and Sir Ian McKellen. Take note of the scenery, costumes, characters and what is – or isn’t! – going on here. Then write up a brief summary of what you see.
4. Finally, read the play in full. It’s short – post-it note what seems significant, or even ridiculous. Comment, question, analyze what you are reading – and see how this connects to absurdity, the meaning of life, and/or Man’s Existential Dilemma.

Deadlines for all this will probably be in August, and when we meet up that first day of class we will continue our discussion/Socratic Circle all you’ve learned, and get ready to write your first essay on the play and the relevant background material/ideas. I’ve also included/attached the appropriate rubrics and TP-CASTT sheet that will be used to assess your work.

I do check email and our Google classroom over the summer, so feel free to contact me at my gmail account, audrey.strahl@motsd.org or via our AP Lit & Comp Summer Scholars class if you have questions or comments. I will be posting additional materials and even questions in classroom as well.

Enjoy! Look forward to having you in class in September.

Sincerely,

Ms. Strahl
The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock

BY T. S. ELIOT

S’io credesse che mia risposta fosse
A persona che mai tornasse al mondo,
Questa fiamma staria senza piu scosse.
Ma percioche giammai di questo fondo
Non torno vivo alcun, s’i’odo il vero,
Senza tema d’infamia ti rispondo.

(note: this epigraph is from Dante’s Inferno – feel free to look up & translate this)

Let us go then, you and I,
When the evening is spread out against the sky
Like a patient etherized upon a table;
Let us go, through certain half-deserted streets,
The muttering retreats
Of restless nights in one-night cheap hotels
And sawdust restaurants with oyster-shells:
Streets that follow like a tedious argument
Of insidious intent
To lead you to an overwhelming question ...
Oh, do not ask, “What is it?”
Let us go and make our visit.

In the room the women come and go
Talking of Michelangelo.

The yellow fog that rubs its back upon the window-panes,
The yellow smoke that rubs its muzzle on the window-panes,
Licked its tongue into the corners of the evening,
Lingered upon the pools that stand in drains,
Let fall upon its back the soot that falls from chimneys,
Slipped by the terrace, made a sudden leap,
And seeing that it was a soft October night,  
Curled once about the house, and fell asleep.

And indeed there will be time  
For the yellow smoke that slides along the street,  
Rubbing its back upon the window-panes;  
There will be time, there will be time  
To prepare a face to meet the faces that you meet;  
There will be time to murder and create,  
And time for all the works and days of hands  
That lift and drop a question on your plate;  
Time for you and time for me,  
And time yet for a hundred indecisions,  
And for a hundred visions and revisions,  
Before the taking of a toast and tea.

In the room the women come and go  
Talking of Michelangelo.

And indeed there will be time  
To wonder, “Do I dare?” and, “Do I dare?”  
Time to turn back and descend the stair,  
With a bald spot in the middle of my hair —  
(They will say: “How his hair is growing thin!”)  
My morning coat, my collar mounting firmly to the chin,  
My necktie rich and modest, but asserted by a simple pin —  
(They will say: “But how his arms and legs are thin!”)  
Do I dare  
Disturb the universe?  
In a minute there is time  
For decisions and revisions which a minute will reverse.

For I have known them all already, known them all:  
Have known the evenings, mornings, afternoons,  
I have measured out my life with coffee spoons;  
I know the voices dying with a dying fall  
Beneath the music from a farther room.
So how should I presume?

And I have known the eyes already, known them all—
The eyes that fix you in a formulated phrase,
And when I am formulated, sprawling on a pin,
When I am pinned and wriggling on the wall,
Then how should I begin
To spit out all the butt-ends of my days and ways?
   And how should I presume?

And I have known the arms already, known them all—
Arms that are braceleted and white and bare
(But in the lamplight, downed with light brown hair!)
Is it perfume from a dress
That makes me so digress?
Arms that lie along a table, or wrap about a shawl.
   And should I then presume?
   And how should I begin?

Shall I say, I have gone at dusk through narrow streets
And watched the smoke that rises from the pipes
Of lonely men in shirt-sleeves, leaning out of windows? ...

I should have been a pair of ragged claws
Scuttling across the floors of silent seas.

And the afternoon, the evening, sleeps so peacefully!
Smoothed by long fingers,
Asleep ... tired ... or it malingers,
Stretched on the floor, here beside you and me.
Should I, after tea and cakes and ices,
Have the strength to force the moment to its crisis?
But though I have wept and fasted, wept and prayed,
Though I have seen my head (grown slightly bald) brought in upon a platter,
I am no prophet — and here’s no great matter;
I have seen the moment of my greatness flicker,
And I have seen the eternal Footman hold my coat, and snicker,
And in short, I was afraid.

And would it have been worth it, after all,  
After the cups, the marmalade, the tea,  
Among the porcelain, among some talk of you and me,  
Would it have been worth while,  
To have bitten off the matter with a smile,  
To have squeezed the universe into a ball  
To roll it towards some overwhelming question,  
To say: “I am Lazarus, come from the dead,  
Come back to tell you all, I shall tell you all”—

If one, settling a pillow by her head
   Should say: “That is not what I meant at all;  
   That is not it, at all.’’

And would it have been worth it, after all,  
Would it have been worth while,  
After the sunsets and the dooryards and the sprinkled streets,  
After the novels, after the teacups, after the skirts that trail along the floor—  
And this, and so much more?—  
It is impossible to say just what I mean!  
But as if a magic lantern threw the nerves in patterns on a screen:  
Would it have been worth while  
If one, settling a pillow or throwing off a shawl,  
And turning toward the window, should say:  
   “That is not it at all,  
   That is not what I meant, at all.’’

No! I am not Prince Hamlet, nor was meant to be;  
Am an attendant lord, one that will do  
To swell a progress, start a scene or two,  
Advise the prince; no doubt, an easy tool,  
Deferential, glad to be of use,  
Politic, cautious, and meticulous;  
Full of high sentence, but a bit obtuse;  
At times, indeed, almost ridiculous—  
Almost, at times, the Fool.
I grow old ... I grow old ...
I shall wear the bottoms of my trousers rolled.

Shall I part my hair behind?  Do I dare to eat a peach?
I shall wear white flannel trousers, and walk upon the beach.
I have heard the mermaids singing, each to each.

I do not think that they will sing to me.

I have seen them riding seaward on the waves
Combing the white hair of the waves blown back
When the wind blows the water white and black.
We have lingered in the chambers of the sea
By sea-girls wreathed with seaweed red and brown
Till human voices wake us, and we drown.

### ANNOTATION/POST-IT NOTING RUBRIC

**A range – 90 to 100 points**

* Text has been thoroughly annotated with questions, observations and reflections of the content as well as the writing.
* Comments demonstrate analysis and interpretation – thinking beyond the surface level of the text. Thoughtful connections to the components and purpose of the literary work, including the elements of fiction (or poetry, prose, drama) and literary devices.
* Annotation covers full length of work – attention paid to all chapters, verses, paragraphs and acts/scenes.

**High B range – 86 to 89 points**

* Text has been annotated reasonably well with questions, observations and/or reflections of the content as well as the writing.
* Comments demonstrate some analysis and interpretation – thinking somewhat beyond the surface level of the text. Attempts at making connections to all elements, devices of the work have been made.
* Annotation covers most of work – covering a thorough range of the material.

**Low B range – 80 to 85 points**

* Text has been somewhat annotated with at least one of the following: questions, observations, and/or reflections of the content and possibly the writing.
* Comments demonstrate an attempt to analyze and/or interpret the text.
* Annotation covers some of work – covering some aspects of the material.

**C range – 71 to 79 points**

* Text has been briefly annotated.
* Commentary remains mostly at surface level. Little or no effort to analyze/interpret the text.
* Commentary suggests thought in brief sections of work.

**F range – 70 points and below**

* Little or no effort has been made to annotate the text, or cover the material.

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**Name:** _________________________________________

**Section:** _____________________
TPCASTT
— an analysis method for poetry —

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Before reading a poem, speculate on what you think the poem might be about based only on the title. Often time authors conceal meaning, or give clues to the main idea, in the title.</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>NOW, READ THE POEM. ONCE READ, LOOK AT THE FOLLOWING AREAS…</strong></td>
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<td>Paraphrase</td>
<td>Before thinking about the meaning of a poem, identify the literal meaning of the poem. When you paraphrase a poem, write in your own words exactly what happens in the poem (the literal meaning of the poem). Look at the number of sentences in the poem—your paraphrase should have roughly the same number—essentially this is a word for word, line by line, translation. Note: paraphrase is NOT the same as summarize. Summarization is an abridged recap, and therefore would be MUCH shorter than the poem itself.</td>
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| Connotation | This term usually refers to the emotional overtones of word choice, as well as any and all poetic devices. You should focus on how such devices contribute to the meaning, the effect, or both, of a poem. Consider the following elements when looking at connotation:  
  o imagery  
  o figures of speech (simile, metaphor, personification, symbolism, allusion, etc.)  
  o diction (intentional word choice)  
  o point of view (the speaker of the poem and his/her impact on the content)  
  o sound devices (alliteration, onomatopoeia, consonance, assonance, rhythm, rhyme, etc.) It is not necessary that you identify all the poetic devices within the poem, but it is key that you note the ones that most impact the meaning of the poem itself. |
| Attitude | Keeping the connotation in mind, identify the poem’s attitude/tone. Ask yourself, “what is the speaker’s attitude about the main idea of the poem?” Note: the tone/attitude often can be captured with a single word, but sometimes a phrase or a sentence is necessary. When one word will do, always insure that it is the best word: stay away from overly general descriptors such as “dark,” “nice,” and/or “sad.” |
| Shift | Rarely does a poem begin and end in the same poetic place. Often, a speaker's understanding of an experience is a gradual realization, and the therefore the poem is a reflection of that growing understanding/insight. Watch for the following keys to note when a shift occurs:  
| key words (but, yet, however, although)  
| punctuation (dashes, periods, colons, ellipsis)  
| stanza divisions / abrupt line breaks  
| changes in line length, stanza length, or both  
| a sudden ironic element  
| changes in sound that may indicate changes in meaning  
| changes in diction (specifically the diction's tone) |
| Title (revisited) | Revisit the title by looking at it again, but this time keeping in mind what you already know about the poem. Ask yourself, “knowing what I do now, does the title provide an insight/meaning to the poem that I previously did not note?” and, “how does the poem’s title contribute to the overall meaning of the poem?” |
| Theme | What does the poem say about the human experience, motivation, or condition? What idea does the poet want you take away with you concerning the human experience?  
The following are the six traits of a well written theme:  
1. it should be expressed in a statement with a subject and a predicate (a complete sentence)  
2. it should be stated as a generalization about the human experience: specific characters, locations, and dates are unnecessary  
3. Avoid making a generalizations larger than what is justified by the terms of the story  
4. A theme is the central and unifying concept of a piece, thereby it must account for all major details in the poem and cannot be contradicted by any details in the poem (nor can it rely upon supposed facts)  
5. There is no one way to state a theme: one theme may be phrased in a variety of ways  
6. Avoid reducing a theme to a familiar saying or cliché that has been heard by many, such as “Don’t judge a book by its cover,” or “You must walk in another man’s shoes in order to fully understand him.” |
### TPCASTT

— an analysis method for poetry —

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**Now, fill this in for the poem you are reading...**

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