

**Advanced Placement English**  
**Mr. Smith** (email: fsmith@saint-bernard.com)

**Summer Reading**  
**2019-2020**

*The summer reading program is an important feature of the AP English Literature course. It serves two functions: 1) to keep you active as a reader, broadening your horizons, and 2) to forestall summer brain death, through writing about what you have read.*

**TEXTS:**

*Hamlet* William Shakespeare  
*The Poisonwood Bible* Barbara Kingsolver  
*Catch-22* Joseph Heller  
*One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* Ken Kesey  
*A Doll House* Henrik Ibsen  
*How to Read Literature Like a Professor* Thomas C. Foster

**PROCEDURE:** Starting June 10- August 12, inclusive, you are to write a **personal reaction**(350 words minimum) to one (1) aspect of the first five (5) works (*not* including *How to Read...*) which you have been reading, approximately 1 novel or play every two weeks. (I would suggest reading *How to Read Literature Like a Professor* first.) The **personal reaction** should not be just a value judgment – “I liked it” – but an identification of and elaboration on some aspect of the work you are reading (theme, symbolism, characterization, etc.) Try to vary these (e.g., don’t write just about symbols each week), and avoid mere plot summary. (The “Table of Contents” of *How to Read...* will provide you with many possible approaches for your personal reactions.) As a general guideline, there are 5 titles (**not** including *How to Read...*) and 10 weeks, so perhaps strive for 2 reactions for each title for the total of 10 reactions. *You must have at least one (1) reaction for each of the 5 works.* The reactions are to be kept in a pocket folder, which will be submitted on the first full day of school. This will count as **two (2) major test grades**. Grades will range from “A” for *superior material* (well-articulated and supported personal reactions and completion of all the readings), to “C” for meeting *minimal standards* (superficial but supported reactions and completion of all the readings), or to “F” for *failure to complete* the assignments. Logs submitted after the first full day will receive a grade no higher than “F” (55). Reference will be made to these works during the year, and they will also serve as a source for your answers to “open” essay questions on the AP English Literature and Composition exam you will sit for in May.

*Finally, while procrastination seems to be as natural a mode of summer behavior as bathing suits are attire, I would suggest that you not try to do all of the reading and writing in the last week of August. Budget your time. [Actually, studies have shown that 33% of the AP Summer Reading is completed after August 1st, but that 93% of the students who actually pass the class have completed at least one assignment by the end of June]. Further, if you intend to profit from this course, I would strongly recommend you not use Shmoop-type sites in lieu of reading the “real” books. You will only do yourself a disservice by such intellectual corner-cutting. I have given my email address above should you need to contact me during the summer.*