**2015 Summer Reading Assignment for AP English Literature and Composition**

Introduction

Welcome to AP English Lit! This course is a challenging course that is designed to be equivalent to an introductory college-level literary analysis course. The short-term goal of this course is to prepare you to pass the AP English Literature exam next May. The long-term goal is to prepare you for future college classes and to improve your reading, analyzing, and writing skills for a lifetime. We will primarily focus on fiction reading and writing, including novels, dramas, poetry, and short stories; however, general vocabulary, argument, and grammar skills will also be emphasized.

The ideal AP student invests up to 5 hours per week on additional coursework and/or AP exam preparation outside of the classroom. A strong work ethic is required for success in this course; all assignments require thought and effort, and late assignments are rarely accepted. I am always willing to give assistance or answer questions, so please don’t hesitate to let me know if you are struggling! Yes, we will work a lot this year, but we will also read interesting, thought-provoking literature and have some great class discussions.

Please visit and bookmark my class web site for your reference throughout the year: **https://sites.google.com/site/BrooksAPLit**. You can find an electronic copy of this assignment there right now, as well as some informational sites about AP Lit.

Texts

Required: Prior to returning to school in the fall, **read the play** ***A Doll’s House* by Henrik Ibsen AND the novella *The Awakening* by Kate Chopin.** (It doesn’t matter which one you read first, but I’d suggest *Doll’s House*.) You may buy the books if you’d like to, or both books are available for free online at Project Gutenburg. Barnes and Noble in Pickerington will have copies; because these texts are so short, they are sometimes published in an anthology with the authors’ other short works, so don’t let that throw you off.

Required: Throughout next year, we will read pertinent chapters from the book ***How to Read Literature Like a Professor* by Thomas C. Foster**. Please purchase a copy of this book so you can keep it all year and annotate as necessary. You may buy it new (Barnes and Noble will have copies) or used (very cheap online). Plan on bringing this book the first day of school; we will work our way through several chapters in our first 9 weeks. Please contact me as soon as possible if you need financial assistance.

Suggested, but not required: The AP exam in May 2016 seems very far away right now, but time flies! Ideally you will be preparing for the exam a little bit at a time all year instead of attempting to cram at the last minute. To this end, consider purchasing a copy of an **AP English Literature preparation book** published after 2010 (so the information is recent). You can buy these books new or used; Half Price Books usually has a good selection in the summer after the class of 2015 sells theirs back. I suggest checking reviews of various books online before purchasing one; *5 Steps to a 5* and the Kaplan books seem to be popular. The goal is to find a book that you like and that has at least 2 practice tests that you can use to test yourself as the exam approaches.

Assignment

**ASSIGNMENT DUE DATE:** Friday, August 21

**LATE WORK ACCEPTED UNTIL:** Friday, August 28 at 2:00; no work accepted after this time.

**GRADING:** 65 points total (30 reading questions + 15 journals + 20 collage); late work subject to 50% penalty.

As you read these books, complete the following assignments. Please read the directions carefully to ensure you meet all expectations. These books will form the basis of our first unit on gender roles and expectations in society, so arrive to school prepared to discuss them in depth. There will be an assessment in the second week of school over these books and class discussions.

**For *The Awakening***, complete the attached reading questions; you should answer them as you read the novel to avoid complicating the answers with later plot events. Please answer the questions THOROUGHLY and INTELLIGENTLY in complete sentences, or in paragraphs when necessary. You may submit your responses on paper or electronically, but I prefer you share them with me (jbrooks@reyn.org) on Google Docs. If you have never used Google Docs, now is the time to learn since I will require all long papers and projects this year to be completed with the Google suite. For this first assignment, you may use your personal account or your school account. A warning: **using other people’s words or thoughts as your own is plagiarism. Anyone found plagiarizing, cheating, copying, or misrepresenting their work in any way will receive a ZERO.**

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**For *A Doll’s House***, complete the 2 attached reader response journals AND create a collage according to the attached instructions. You may submit your journals on paper or electronically, but I prefer you share them with me (jbrooks@reyn.org) on Google Docs. Your collage can be in the form of a hard copy (poster board) or a digital copy (sent through email or shared through Google). A warning: **using other people’s words, thoughts, or artwork as your own is plagiarism. Anyone found plagiarizing, cheating, copying, or misrepresenting their work in any way will receive a ZERO.**

Thank you for reading! I can’t wait to get started on our journey together! If you have any questions this summer, please don’t hesitate to contact me at jbrooks@reyn.org. Please allow 2-3 days for a response.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Jenny Brooks

***The Awakening* Reading Questions**

\*\*NOTE: These questions generally require thought and interpretation of the novel, NOT just relying on plot elements or what we are told by the narrator. Consider an unspoken “HOW DO YOU KNOW?” at the end of every question.

**Before You Read**

This novel takes place in and around New Orleans in the late 1800s. The characters have plenty of money, the social norms (especially those for women) are very different from ours, and there is liberal use of French phrases throughout. Because this setting may be unfamiliar to you, you may have trouble understanding why characters act the way they do. Read about one of the above topics (what rich people did at this time, what women were expected to do, the Creole culture in New Orleans), write down 5 facts about your topic, and create an MLA citation for whatever source(s) you use.

**Chapters I – IV**

1. What kind of relationship do Mrs. Pontellier and Robert have? Use textual evidence to support your answer.
2. Why do you think Mrs. Pontellier is so sad towards the end of Ch. III?
3. Choose 2 adjectives to describe Mr. Pontellier, considering his scenes in Ch. I-IV, and explain why you chose them.

**Chapters V – VIII**

1. How has Edna and Robert’s relationship changed since Ch. II? Use textual evidence to support your answer.
2. How exactly do you think “the voice of the sea” connects to Edna’s realizations in Ch. VI?
3. Why did Edna marry Mr. Pontellier?
4. Make a small Venn diagram comparing and contrasting Edna and Madame Ratignolle.

**Chapters IX – XVI**

1. Describe the effect Mademoiselle Reisz’s piano playing has on Edna. Summarize in your own words rather than using quotations.
2. Considering water’s associated meanings of rebirth and nourishment, what might Edna’s new-found ability to swim symbolize?
3. Why do you think Robert doesn’t tell Edna about going to Mexico?

**Chapters XVII – XXI**

1. In Ch. XVII, Edna contrasts what she felt/did in the past with how she is feeling/what she is doing now. How has she changed since previous times she has fought with Mr. Pontellier?
2. Why is Edna depressed after visiting Madame Ratingnolle?

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1. Consider the cultural differences Edna saw between herself and the Creoles on Grand Isle earlier in the novel, especially in regards to conversations about love. How does Edna’s reaction to Victor in Ch. XX show that she has changed since the beginning of the novel?

**Chapters XXII – XXIV**

1. What does Mr. Pontellier think is wrong with Edna?
2. What does Doctor Mandelet think is wrong with Mrs. Edna by the end of Ch. XXIII?
3. a. How does Edna feel being left alone in the house? b. Why does she feel this way?
4. Make a prediction: What do you think Edna will do with her newfound alone time?

**Chapters XXV – XXVIII**

1. Briefly describe how the relationship between Alcée Arobin and Edna begins and develops.
2. Why do you think Edna decides to move from her home?
3. a. What feelings does Edna develop in Ch. XXVIII? b. Why do you think she makes the decision she does at the end of Ch. XXVII?

**Chapters XXIX – XXXII**

1. a. What is the problem with Edna’s moving? b. How does Mr. Pontellier solve it?
2. What might the “pigeon house” symbolize for Edna?
3. What does Edna’s love for her children, then immediate forgetting of them, show about her as a person?

**Chapters XXXIII – XXXV**

1. Why do you think Robert doesn’t visit Edna immediately upon returning from Mexico?
2. What do we learn is the real reason for Robert’s trip to Mexico and his staying away from Edna upon his return?
3. Make a prediction: What do you see in the future for Edna and Robert?

**Chapters XXXVI – XXXIX**

1. What does Madame Ratignolle’s advice to “think of the children” show about her as a person?
2. Why isn’t Robert there when Edna returns home?
3. What might the bird at the beach symbolize? Consider Edna’s earlier conversation with Mademoiselle Reisz.
4. Answer in a paragraph: Do you think the ending represents Edna’s selfish, cowardly giving up because her life is too hard and too sad, or do you think she makes a bold statement for women’s rights by refusing to submit to another person’s wishes? Support your opinion with strong examples and/or evidence from the novel.
5. Answer in a paragraph: “Perhaps it is better to wake up after all, even to suffer, rather than to remain a dupe to illusions all one’s life” (Ch. XXXVIII). Do you agree or disagree with Edna’s opinion about her life? Support your opinion with strong examples and/or evidence from the novel.

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***A Doll’s House* Reading Journals and Collage**

Journal #1: Create a characterization chart for the main characters. Include 5 rows for Nora, Torvald, Christine, Krogstad, and Dr. Rank; and include 3 columns for the beginning, middle, and end of the play. For each character, jot a couple adjectives and pieces of information about them at each of the 3 points in the play. For example, for Christine in the beginning, you may include she’s Nora’s old friend, she’s poor, etc. In the middle, you may include she knows Krogstad, she’s a good seamstress, etc. Be sure to focus on the end of the play – how each character has changed, what role they play in the surprise ending, etc.

Journal #2: Did Nora make the “right” decision at the end of the play? Address this question in a thoughtful paragraph of at least 6 good sentences. Keep in mind that she and others may have to suffer consequences of what she’s done. Use textual evidence to support your ideas.

OPTIONAL Journal #3 to fuel the fire of your outrage: Collect a list of all the pet names Torvald calls Nora throughout the play.

Collage Instructions: Based on the play, create a COLORFUL collage consisting of the following elements of the novel: author, title, setting, important plot points, significant images, symbols, and meaningful quotations. Be creative as you work towards building a visually appealing representation of the play. The collage can be in the form of a hard copy (poster board) or a digital copy (stored on a flash drive or sent through email). Do NOT use pictures of the cover of the book or stills from a stage production for this collage; that’s not creative! **This collage should be your own creation. Using other people’s words, thoughts, or artwork as your own is plagiarism. Anyone found plagiarizing, cheating, copying, or misrepresenting their work in any way will receive a ZERO.**

Here is an example using the novel *The Poisonwood Bible* by Barbara Kingsolver:

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