

AP Literature Summer Reading and Writing Assignment (12th Grade)

Read *The Catcher in the Rye* by J.D. Salinger, *Much Ado About Nothing* by William Shakespeare, and *Their Eyes Were Watching God* by Zora Neale Hurston. Then, answer each of the following questions. You can handwrite or type your responses. Provide the question number for each answer. Your responses should be six to ten sentences per question. You also need to provide specific examples from the texts to support your responses. You are encouraged to provide one or two direct quotes per question (with page number citations). Your responses need to be well argued and thoroughly supported with the assigned texts.

***You should expect a reading comprehension test for all three assigned texts the first week you return to school. We will then spend the first nine weeks analyzing the texts in preparation for the Literary Argument Essay on the AP Literature and Composition Exam.**

1. In *The Catcher in the Rye*, is Holden a static or dynamic character? Why?
2. Throughout Holden's journey in *The Catcher in the Rye*, which moment affects him the most? Why?
3. Compare and contrast Claudio and Hero's relationship with Benedick and Beatrice's relationship in *Much Ado About Nothing*.
4. According to English poet and novelist George Meredith, "The true test of comedy is that it shall awaken thoughtful laughter." Identify the elements of *Much Ado About Nothing* that make this play both humorous and thought-provoking. Evaluate how the play's combination of humor with more serious elements contributes to the overall meaning of the work.
5. In *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, which TWO characters have the most impact (positive and/or negative) on Janie's journey? Why?
6. In *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, what lessons does Janie learn in each of her three marriages?
7. It has often been said that what we value can be determined only by what we sacrifice. Consider how this statement applies to a character from ONE of your summer reading texts. Discuss ONE character who has deliberately sacrificed, surrendered, or forfeited something in a way that highlights that character's values.
8. In his 2004 novel *Magic Seeds*, V.S. Naipaul writes, "It is wrong to have an ideal view of the world. That's where the mischief starts. That's where everything starts unravelling." Select ONE of your summer reading texts and consider how this statement applies to ONE character who holds an "ideal view of the world." Analyze the character's idealism and its positive or negative consequences.
9. In many works of literature, a physical journey – the literal movement from one place to another – plays a central role. Select ONE of your summer reading texts in which a physical journey is an important element and discuss how the journey adds to the meaning of the work as a whole. Avoid mere plot summary.
10. Critic Roland Barthes has said, "Literature is the question minus the answer." Select ONE of your summer reading texts and, considering Barthes's observation, analyze a central question the work raises and the extent to which the text offers any answers. Explain how the author's treatment of this question affects your understanding of the work as a whole.