

Summer Reading for AP Literature and Composition 2018-2019

Cat's Eye (1988)

Margaret Atwood

20th Century (1901-current)

The Scarlet Letter (1850)

Nathaniel Hawthorne

Victorian Era (1830-1901)

Be prepared to bring both novels to class during the first month of school.

TASK 1 – Due the first day of class

Write a three-page essay in response to this modified prompt from a 2010 AP Lit. test:

Palestinian-American literary theorist and cultural critic Edward Said has written, “Exile is strangely compelling to think about but terrible to experience. It is the unhealable rift forced between a human being and a native place, between the self and its true home: its essential sadness can never be surmounted.” Yet Said has also said that exile can become “a potent, even enriching” experience. Consider how Elaine Risley (*Cat's Eye*) and Hester Prynne (*The Scarlet Letter*) experience such a rift and become cut off from home. Keep in mind that home can mean birthplace, family, community, homeland, or other special place. Then write an analytical essay comparing¹ how the characters’ exile both alienates and enriches and how their experiences illuminate the meaning of the work as a whole². Do not merely summarize the plot.

1. *Comparison* refers to differences as well as similarities. The term “compare and contrast” is redundant.
2. The *meaning of the work as a whole* refers to the theme (message/moral) of the story.

Introduction: Start with a published quote that resonates with the theme of alienation, not a quote from either novel. Use www.brainyquote.com or some other source. Add a sentence of reflecting on how this quote connects to the novels. Then, provide the thesis—preferably one sentence. Introductions for AP Lit. essays are short.

Thesis statement: The thesis *must* include words from the prompt, sans quotation marks. The thesis must address *all* aspects of the prompt. For a short paper like this, a thesis should be one sentence.

General expectations: The essay should not sound like a response to a prompt. Write as if this paper will be published in an academic journal and read by people unfamiliar with these novels. Fill three full pages.

Format expectations: Use MLA format. Do not print on the back of the paper. The works cited page must be a separate document and will include both novels and the quote source for the introductory paragraph.

Grading: Because we do not expect you to be *now* the writers you *will become*, the essay will not be graded for style or high level technical skill. However, we do expect students to follow directions and use MLA format.

TASK 2 – Due the first day of class

Collect 15 quotes for each novel:

Pull quotes that reflect the impetus and the ramifications of alienation. Follow these guidelines:

- Do not focus only on negative elements.
- Quotes should be pulled from the *entire* book, not just the first few chapters.
- Submit a typed document listing quotes in chronological order.
- Each book will be a separate stapled packet of work.
- Number quotes.
- Single space quotes but space between them.
- Besides the modified spacing, these documents must be in MLA format.
- The citation will include page and chapter numbers, like this: (178; ch. 3) or (246-47; ch. 5).
- To save paper, quotes can be on both the front and back of a page.
- Quotes can be used in the essay.
- Copy quotes correctly.

TASK 3 – Be prepared for a vocabulary quiz on the *The Scarlet Letter* list.

A hard copy is on elwoodeducation.com and quizlet can be accessed here: quizlet.com.

If you have any questions, you may email one of the AP Lit teachers. Only do so, however, after you checked www.elwoodeducation.com to see if your question was already answered.

AP Lit Teachers: elwoodeducation@gmail.com and cunningham.margaret@tusd.org.