

AP English Literature and Composition  
Summer Reading 2025  
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*"What really knocks me out is a book that, when you're all done reading it, you wish the author that wrote it was a terrific friend of yours and you could call him up on the phone whenever you felt like it. That doesn't happen much, though."*

*– J.D. Salinger, *Catcher in the Rye**

Welcome to AP English! AP English Literature and Composition is an intensive course designed to expose you to many great works of literature. Although we must prepare for the AP Exam, our main goals will be the advanced study of literature, insightful analysis, and effective written communication. We will therefore be sampling a wide range of authors and genres throughout the year. This summer you are to prepare for a challenging course of study by reading the listed texts and working on corresponding writing assignments. All summer reading and writing is due on the first day of classes unless otherwise noted. Sparknotes or any other substitutions to texts will not work at the AP level.

Titles listed below, followed by details for writing assignments.

Informational:

How to Read Literature Like a Professor by Thomas C. Foster (excerpts, as noted below)

Novel:

Pride and Prejudice by Jane Austen

Important Notes: 1. You are expected to read the texts listed above, during the summer. You will notice that you are only assigned certain chapters from HTRLLAP, but you must read the entirety of Pride and Prejudice, unabridged. Please devote yourself to critical and close readings of the books, not simple surface readings! 2. Study guides (such as Cliffs Notes and SparkNotes) may NEVER be used as a substitute for the reading assigned. I email you notes on the text, but please do not only read the notes. You are in AP - you must read the entire book!

**Required AP Summer Assignments: Purchase your own copies of all summer reading works as part of the assignment to annotate as you read.**

1. For How to Read Literature Like a Professor (HTRLLAP): This text

will help you and be quite useful for our study of literature throughout the year. Please annotate the assigned chapters for this text. These are: **Introduction, 1, 5, 6, 9, 10, 12, 21, and 24.** (During the first week of class, I will check your annotated books. One of the first grades you receive for AP English Literature and Composition will be for completing annotations for these chapters.) See writing assignment below for how HTRLLAP pertains to Pride and Prejudice.

2. For Pride and Prejudice: Please annotate this text, keeping in mind what you've read in HTRLLAP. Pay attention to how you can apply what you've read from Foster's book to heighten your understanding and enrich your reading of this novel. While the number of annotations may vary amongst students and chapters, your annotations should reflect a high level of engagement with the text. These annotations will facilitate your understanding, essay writing, and class discussions.

3. Using quotations from both texts (HTRLLAP and Pride and Prejudice) as well as your own commentary, answer TWO OUT OF THE FIVE PROMPTS listed below. \*This should be a well-written discussion (i.e.: detailed—sometimes multiple—paragraphs) of the message Foster is expressing in HTRLLAP and the message the author is expressing in his or her novel.

a. Every Trip is a Quest (Ch. 1): "The real reason for a quest is always self-knowledge" (Foster 3). In Pride and Prejudice, what is the quest? Choose a character and explain (in detail) how he/she gains self-knowledge. Cite from the novel as you explain your answer.

b. It's More Than Just Rain or Snow (Ch. 9): "It's never just rain" (Foster 70). Choose a scene from Pride and Prejudice where weather OR the environment is more than what it seems and explain the significance. Cite from the text and be detailed.

c. Is That a Symbol? (Ch. 12): "Some symbols do have a relatively limited range of meanings, but in general a symbol can't be reduced to standing for only one thing. If they can, it's not symbolism, it's allegory" (Foster 105). Identify a symbol in Pride and Prejudice. What is the writer doing with this image or object? What possibilities are suggested by the movement of the narrative? What does the image or object FEEL like it is doing? Cite and support from the text.

d. Marked for Greatness (Ch. 21): “How many stories do you know in which the hero is different from everyone else in some way...” (Foster 203). Who is the hero/heroine of Pride and Prejudice? How do you know he/she is the hero/heroine? Is there a visible, physical difference between the hero and other characters? Be detailed and cite evidence.

e. Don't Read with Your Eyes (Ch. 24): “...take the works as they were intended to be taken...” (Foster 234). A. Choose a quote that reflects the overall meaning of Pride and Prejudice and explain. B. What did you get from this reading experience?

**Suggested:** There are MULTIPLE versions of Pride and Prejudice to stream. Similarly, there are MANY different movies and series about Jane Austen. I will email you a list of titles that I am aware of. If you watch one of these and write a review, I will offer extra credit for a quiz during the year.

### **Suggested Pacing Guide for Summer Assignments:**

Complete reading of assigned chapters in HTRLAP - **July 1**

Complete reading of Pride and Prejudice - **August 2 (there are 3 volumes)**

Complete writing assignments for HTRLAP and Jane Eyre - **August 30**

