

**June 2011
A.P. English**

Summer Assignment

As part of the requirements for the AP English program, you are required to complete a summer assignment. **This year the assignment is to read two novels: one is a required title; the other is a choice novel from our list below. You will complete notes on the required book and a short paper for the choice book. Expect follow-up graded work in September.**

Here are the instructions that you need to complete your first important assignment of AP English:

1. Read The Things They Carried by Tim O'Brien, a significant work of American literature. For this novel we encourage you to **take notes on characterization, structure, point of view, key scenes, themes, author's style**, since *you will be evaluated on your reading the first week of school*.
2. Read **one** of the choice books listed below and follow the procedure for writing a **one page typed response** for the novel (which you will find explained below and on the back of this sheet). You will **use a hero archetype to guide your response** for the choice book. Your choices are:

We Were the Mulvaneys by Joyce Carol Oates (1996)

East of Eden by John Steinbeck (1952)

The Namesake by Jhumpa Lahiri (2003)

Cider House Rules by John Irving (1985)

The Poisonwood Bible by Barbara Kingsolver (1998)

The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier and Clay by Michael Chabon (2000)

Directions: For the choice novel develop a **one page typed (double-spaced) response that discusses the hero archetype you have chosen**. (see the list of hero archetypes on the reverse side). Your paper must use precise language, clear paragraphs, and specific and salient details from the novel. ***Do not exceed this one page for each novel, so choose your language carefully and revise well.***

You should expect these graded assignments in early September:

- You will hand in a one page typed response for your choice novel. This **response will be handed in on the first day of school**. This response will be worth 50 points. You will also be expected to give a formal graded presentation on your choice novel during the month of September.
- You will be evaluated on your reading of The Things They Carried the **first week of school**. This will count as 50 points. There will be an additional evaluation later on in September. More details will be given on these procedures when classes begin.

Further Directions for the Choice Novel:

Explanation:

This year we will explore the idea that the stories that we tell—whether they take the form of a novel, a play, a movie, etc.—stem from ideas that have been part of the human consciousness since the early days of myths. Joseph Campbell has explored this idea in his influential books, *The Power of Myth* and *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*. We will use his idea of the hero archetype to guide our summer reading and consequent class discussion throughout the school year.

Choose one of these hero archetypes that you feel *best* “drives” your choice novel.

1. A hero gives his/her life to something bigger than himself, to some higher end.
2. A hero performs a courageous act, either physical or spiritual.
3. The hero undergoes trials and tests to see if he/she has the courage, the knowledge, and the capacity to survive.
4. A hero’s journey usually consists of a departure, a fulfillment, and a return.
5. A hero embarks on a series of adventures to recover what is lost, or to discover some life-giving information.
6. The hero usually moves out of the known, conventional safety of his/her own life to undertake the journey.
7. A hero is usually someone from whom something has been taken, or who feels there’s something lacking in the normal experience available or permitted to members of his/her society.

Summer reading is an important part of the course since our discussions and assessments at the beginning of the first quarter will focus on your reading, note taking, and thinking. We hope you will enjoy the challenge of doing some good reading over the summer months.