
Welcome to AP Literature and Composition!

I'm sure you can't wait for your summer to begin. However, before you get lost in your own literary world, you have a summer reading assignment for class next fall.

I hope to send you off this year with a challenging and thought-provoking summer reading and writing experience. For your summer reading, you will read and annotate *Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children* by Ransom Riggs and focus on Jacob's journey, *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald and keep a dialectical journal, and read and annotate *The Poisonwood Bible* by Barbara Kingsolver. All the reading and written responses give you the opportunity to reflect upon the author's style, how that style creates meaning, and in turn, how the novel impacts the human condition.

Part I: *Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children* by Ransom Riggs **DUE: August 17, 2016**

STEP ONE - As practice for your close reading skill, you are expected to annotate the novel as you read. What you are looking for is evidence of **Jacob's physical journey**.

Annotation Expectations: As you read, note the instances (setting) where Jacob has **moved physically** from one place to another. For example, Jacob's journey begins by leaving home in Florida and arriving at Cairnholm Island, Wales. Jacob will move physically MANY TIMES after that. **By annotation I mean** highlight or underline the passage and note in the margin where he left and where he is now. Then, create a chart that records the page number, the passage, and the purpose of the movement.

Other things to note and annotate include narration/point of view, imagery, and the use of supernatural.

STEP TWO - You will be completing **THREE JOURNAL** assignments while you are reading. Journals should be approximately one full page. Entries should be typed, double-spaced, your name in the upper left hand corner, and use 12 point Times New Roman font. Each entry **MUST** also include two specific details, cited correctly! Choose your three entries from the questions below:

1. Trace the evolution/devolution of the protagonist. What obstacles does s/he face and how is her/his character being revealed through these obstacles? Does the character seem to have a difficult or easy time learning and/or adapting? What do you think influences this about the character? **(include 2 specific details, cited correctly)**
2. How does the author's writing style impact your experience of the novel? Things to consider: point of view, voice, sentence structure, word choice. **(include 2 specific details, cited correctly)**
3. What are the two most significant moments in the novel? How did they impact the story? (think plot and characters. Explain. **(include 2 specific details, cited correctly)**
4. What are the atmospherics used to build suspense in the novel. Find some examples of how the author uses language to instill unease, fear, and tension. **(include 2 specific details, cited correctly)**
5. Some readers have complained about the inconsistency of the narrative voice, that it was perhaps too sophisticated for a young boy, even an adolescent? Do you agree, or disagree? Does the narrative voice change during the course of the novel? **(include 2 specific details, cited correctly)**

In addition, expect a reading quiz within the first few days of school as well as a possible writing assignment. Late work or excuses of not understanding are not acceptable so **BE PREPARED!!!** (See end of the document for how your work will be assessed).

Part II: *The Great Gatsby*

DUE: Tuesday, August 23, 2016

- Critically read *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald. Your assignment will be to keep a dialectical journal for which you will select important passages and analyze the significance of the passage. Consider symbols, rhetorical devices, diction, syntax, and figurative language. You must analyze a minimum of 10 passages. (see detailed explanation, samples, and rubric at the end of the document) This assignment is worth 50 points.
- You will have a comprehensive reading quiz on *The Great Gatsby* within the first few days of the week that the work is due. This quiz will be worth 20-30 points.

Part III: Poisonwood Bible

***NOTE – this is broken up into sections**DUE: SEE EACH SECTION**

- ***Poisonwood Bible Response Questions—to be handed in according to dates below.***
- Please complete three responses as you read (one from each of the sections below). These responses will be like the blog responses that you'll complete during the school year. Each response should answer at least one of the prompts, using integrated, apt quotes from the reading to support your assertions. End your response with a “lingering question” – a question that remains unanswered at the end of that section of the reading. Each response should be typed and about a page in length. Each response is worth 10 points. Responses MUST be turned in during class; late work – even in the case of an absence will not be accepted. ***In addition, you may choose to complete a second response from each section for 5 points extra credit. The extra credit responses are due the SAME day as the homework and again, late work even in the case of an absence will not be accepted.***
- **Response #1: pages 1 - 186 (Books I and II)/ DUE: Tuesday, August 30, 2016**
 - The novel opens with a narrative directive, presumably to the reader: *Imagine a ruin so strange it must never have happened. First, picture the forest. I want you to be its conscience, the eyes in the trees.* What is the effect of this directive on you as a reader? What does it suggest about the novel that's about to unfold? As Orleana continues her narration, who does the “you” that she is speaking to appear to be? To what great disasters does she allude? Why is she telling the story looking back (past) on Africa while the girls seem to tell it as if it's happening (present) in Africa? “And now we are here” (Kingsolver 13).
 - How does Kingsolver use voice to characterize each sister? Which sister's voice is the most compelling for you?
 - Kingsolver has said, in talking about how she names her characters that, “A name has to be just right: memorable, culturally appropriate, original but not silly. And ideally, it carries some meaning that coincides nicely with the person's intentions and character.” Consider the significance of names in *The Poisonwood Bible*.
 - Book Two is entitled “The Revelation” and the girls’ section is entitled “The Things We Learned.” Whose revelation? What is the revelation? What do the girls learn?
 - Patrice Lumumba: Kingsolver’s novel arguably is as much about Patrice Lumumba and the historical events in the Congo in the early 1960s as it is about the Price family. As you read, consider how the political events in the Congo affect and mirror what is happening to and within the Price family.
- **Response #2: pages 187-376 (Books III and IV) / DUE: Tuesday, September 6, 2016**
 - What is the significance of the Kikongo word *nommo* and its attendant concepts of being and naming? How do the Price sisters’ Christian names and their acquired Kikongo names (210, 225) reflect their personalities and behavior?
 - The African concepts of *nommo* and *muntu* are introduced in this section of the reading (209 - 210). Explain them. How do these ideas compare to similar western concepts of naming and existence?
 - What ideas are examined about justice and balance/ betrayal and salvation/ guilt and innocence/ freedom and captivity?

• **Response #3: pages 377-end (Books V and VI) / DUE: Tuesday, September 13, 2016**

- Orleanna says, "To live is to change, to acquire the words of a story, and that is the only celebration we mortals really know" (385). Adah says, about her mother, "...she constantly addresses the ground under her feet. Asking forgiveness. Owning, disowning, recanting, recharting a hateful course of events to make sense of her own complicity. We all are, I suppose. Trying to invent our version of the story. All human odes are essentially one. 'My life: what I stole from history, and how I live with it.' (492). What does this novel ultimately say about story-telling?
- Look again at the first and last chapter of the novel. Consider the ways in which the last chapter is a response to the first. Consider how the idea of "ruin" is reworked. Consider the significance of the okapi.
- Within the context of her novel, Kingsolver both introduces us to African concepts such as nommo and muntu and then goes a step further and requires us to accept those beliefs. Consider the significance of book 7, "The Eyes in the Trees" and its impact on the reader. What is Kingsolver doing with this final book of her "Poisonwood Bible"? Consider the significance of this quote: "The glide of belly on branch. The mouth thrown open wide, sky blue. I am all that is here. The eyes in the trees never blink. You plead with me your daughter sister for release, but I am no little beast and have no reason to judge. No teeth and no reason. If you feel a gnawing at your bones, that is only yourself, hungry" (Kingsolver 537).
- How can this novel be read as a political or religious allegory? Do you agree with Kingsolver's conclusions that everyone is complicit?

Part IV: The Poisonwood Bible

We will discuss by sections according to dates above

The Poisonwood Bible is a story told by the wife and four daughters of Nathan Price, a fierce, evangelical Baptist who takes his family and mission to the Belgian Congo in 1959. They carry with them everything they believe they will need from home, but soon find that all of it--from garden seeds to Scripture--is calamitously transformed on African soil. What follows is a suspenseful epic of one family's tragic undoing and remarkable reconstruction over the course of three decades in postcolonial Africa.

The novel is set against one of the most dramatic political chronicles of the twentieth century: the Congo's fight for independence from Belgium, the murder of its first elected prime minister, the CIA coup to install his replacement, and the insidious progress of a world economic order that robs the fledgling African nation of its autonomy. Against this backdrop, Orleanna Price reconstructs the story of her evangelist husband's part in the Western assault on Africa, a tale indelibly darkened by her own losses and unanswerable questions about her own culpability. Also narrating the story, by turns, are her four daughters--the self-centered, teenaged Rachel; shrewd adolescent twins Leah and Adah; and Ruth May, a prescient five-year-old. These sharply observant girls, who arrive in the Congo with racial preconceptions forged in 1950s Georgia, will be marked in surprisingly different ways by their father's intractable mission, and by Africa itself. Ultimately each must strike her own separate path to salvation. Their passionately intertwined stories become a compelling exploration of moral risk and personal responsibility.

Dancing between the dark comedy of human failings and the breathtaking possibilities of human hope, *The Poisonwood Bible* possesses all that has distinguished Barbara Kingsolver's previous work, and extends this beloved writer's vision to an entirely new level. Taking its place alongside the classic works of postcolonial literature, this ambitious novel establishes Kingsolver as one of the most thoughtful and daring of modern writers. "What we have here--with this new, mature, angry, heartbroken, expansive out-of-Africa Kingsolver--is at last our very own Lessing and our very own Gordimer."

--The Nation

http://www.kingsolver.com/bookshelf/poisonwood_bible.asp

- Read the book. This book will be followed during the school year by *Heart of Darkness* and a revisiting of *Things Fall Apart*, works of literature that use an African setting to explore ideas about perspective and human nature. *The Poisonwood Bible* will introduce questions and themes that we will continue to examine in these subsequent works, so it is essential that you read it thoughtfully. This novel will take a

concentrated amount of time, so you should not wait until the last days of your summer vacation to begin the assignment. If you read the novel earlier in the summer, we suggest you review it and your response questions shortly before school begins. It is not acceptable to argue that you did not do well on the quiz/ are not prepared for the quiz because you “read the book too long ago.”

- As you read, consider the following important elements of the novel.
 - Characters—how does Kingsolver portray them? Consider thematic nomenclature.
 - Identify and reflect on the significance of character foils.
 - Biblical allusions • Symbols and motifs/ recurring details
 - Imagery
 - Foreshadowing
 - Tone/ attitude of the narrators
 - Diction/ syntax and how both are used to create distinctive voices for the characters
 - Theme/ thematic ideas
 - Structure of the novel, including the significance of the quotes that precede each section.
- ***After you have marked your book with the above in mind, I will ask you to select a single chapter where you annotated the book particularly efficiently. You will mark that chapter and turn that in for scoring. (I will give you the choice of chapters to submit on the due date above).*** I will review your other annotations in class via discussions and observations. (This will be worth 15 points)
- **Be prepared to discuss the following Study Questions for *The Poisonwood Bible*:**
 1. How does Kingsolver present the double themes of captivity and freedom and of love and betrayal? What kind of captivity and freedom does she explore/ What kinds of love and betrayal? What are the causes and consequences of each kind of captivity, freedom, love, and betrayal?
 2. There are numerous differences to sight/eyes in *The Poisonwood Bible*. Who is “blind”? Who is a visionary? How do these differences illuminate the messages of the book?
 3. Studying a work with multiple narrators offers the ultimate opportunity to demonstrate juxtaposition of style. For instance, in *The Poisonwood Bible*, each daughter’s voice/distinctive point of view is created clearly by her syntax and diction. Make note of distinctive examples of word choice and sentence structure that aid in creating attitude, tone, and mood.
 4. One of the effects of the novel’s shifting perspective is also its unusual style of characterization: for example, Nathan, one of the major characters in the novel, is revealed to us only via others’ view of him. What does this say about the effect of social environment on identity?
 5. Kingsolver says, “I’m a biologist I know that everything eats something else.” Kingsolver utilizes a great deal of animal imagery in this novel. How do the realities of the natural world permeate the novel? Make note of key examples. What role does biology play on each of the character’s experiences? What messages are revealed through these repeated references? What is the human relationship to nature?
 6. The meaning of some literary works is often enhanced by sustained allusion to myths, the Bible, or other works of literature. The *Poisonwood Bible* makes use of such sustained references. Read the notes below about the general structure of the novel and think about why Kingsolver uses such allusions to deepen our understanding of her purpose.
 - Book One—Genesis (the beginning of things, first book of the Bible)
 - “The Things We Carried”
 - Book Two—Revelation (the end of things, last book of the Bible)
 - “The Things We Learned”
 - Book Three—The Judges (the time of judgment, book of the Bible)
 - “The Things We Didn’t Know”
 - Book Four—Bel and the Serpent (an apocryphal book of the Bible about wonders and a dead god)
 - “What We Lost”
 - Book Five—Exodus (Journey to the Promised Land, book of the Bible)
 - “What We Carried Out”

- Book Six—Song of the Three Children (an apocryphal story of hope and despair, in this case the three children are Leah, Rachel, and Adah)
 - “What We Come To”
- Book Seven—The Eyes in the Trees (Kingsolver’s creation)
 - “The Story We have Made our Own”
 - The lost daughter’s tale—Ruth, otherwise known as “muntu Africa” at this transformative point in the novel

Thus, there are seven books (a holy number, representing completion). The novel’s structure underscores its theme, a story of expiation and forgiveness that includes origins and endings, judgment and hope, wonders, a long journey, all resulting in an understanding that weaves its previous books together.

- I am attaching a narration chart that you may consider using as you read.
- The above questions can be used for both the reading quiz (worth 20 points) and a writing assignment (worth 30 points)

STRONGLY RECOMMENDED

If you find yourself missing classical or biblical allusions, these would be great texts to bolster your familiarity. We will be addressing the material in various ways throughout the first semester.

Mythology: Timeless Tales and Gods and Heroes, Edith Hamilton

Bible, King James version or New Revised Standard Version (e-texts available online)

(Genesis, Exodus, Isaiah, the Gospels of Matthew and Luke, and the Book of Revelations are a solid start)

How to Read Literature Like a Professor, Thomas C. Foster

Should you have any questions, concerns, or need further clarification, do not hesitate to contact me!
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Have a great summer and Happy Reading!

Below is the standard for which both your journal responses and blog responses will be assessed:

Grading: Below is the standard rubric that will be used for your journal entries:

- * **9/10 – Response is original, thoughtful, complete and specific with details that support the ideas. Less than six grammar/spelling errors are present and no citation errors.**
- 7/8 – The response demonstrates thoughtful reflection, but may not be long enough. Seven to ten grammar/spelling errors are present and one to two minor citation errors.**
- 5/6 – The student attempted to answer the prompt, but did not fully address the question. Eleven to fifteen grammar/spelling errors are present and three to four minor citation errors.**
- 3/4 – The student response is simplistic or offers only generalizations; may not meet length requirements. Sixteen to twenty grammar/spelling errors are present and one to two major citation errors.**
- 1/2 – The student made little effort to answer the question. Twenty-one or more grammar/spelling errors are present. NO citations included or there are several major errors.**

***Please note – responses that are richer in thought, structure and word choice will determine the difference between 9/10, 7/8, 5/6 etc.**

GUIDELINES FOR THE DIALECTICAL JOURNALS

The term “Dialectic” means “the art or practice of arriving at the truth by using conversation involving question and answer.” Think of your dialectical journal as a series of conversations with the texts we read during this course. The process is meant to help you develop a better understanding of the texts we read. Use your journal to incorporate your personal responses to the texts. You will complete the following parts of the dialectical journal for the assigned text.

There is to be NO collaboration with other students. Any assistance from the internet, movies, or secondary sources such as Spark notes or Cliff Notes will be viewed as cheating. If you have questions about format, email me!

Instructions:

1. Purchase a spiral bound notebook or composition book.
2. Fold the pages in half vertically OR draw a vertical line down the middle of the page.
3. Label the top of each column: left – TEXT and right – RESPONSE
4. In the TEXT column cite passages verbatim from the novel including **quotation marks and page numbers (in other words, CITE correctly!)** – **Example (Klondike 2)**. Please note – there are NO commas in an internal citation!
 - a. Choose passages throughout the entire memoir, not just all from the beginning or the end.
 - b. Passages should be more than a sentence in length.
 - c. When should you write passages down? When you find:
 - i. Details that seem important to you
 - ii. Effective &/or creative use of imagery or symbolism
 - iii. Passages that remind you of your own life or something you’ve seen before
 - iv. Turns in the plot
 - v. An interesting or potentially significant quotation
 - vi. A passage that makes you realize something you hadn’t seen before
 - vii. Examples of patterns: recurring images, ideas, colors, symbols or motifs.
 - viii. Passages with confusing language or unfamiliar vocabulary
 - ix. Events you find surprising or confusing
 - x. Passages that illustrate a particular character or setting
 - xi. Effective use of literary devices
 - xii. You agree or disagree with something a character says or does
 - xiii. Something relevant about the writer’s style
5. In the RESPONSE column reflect upon the passages.
 - a. Raise questions about the beliefs and values implied in the text
 - b. Give your personal reactions to the passage, the characters, the situation
 - c. Discuss the words, ideas, or actions of the author or character
 - d. Tell what it reminds you of from your own experience
 - e. Write about what it makes you think or feel
 - f. Argue with or speak to the character or author
 - g. **Compare the text to other characters or novels**
 - h. **Make connections to any themes that are revealed to you**
 - i. **Make connections among passages or sections of the work**
 - j. **Analyze a passage and its relationship to the story as a whole.**
 - k. **Analyze the text for use of literary or rhetorical devices (tone, structure, style, imagery, etc.)**
 - l. **DO NOT MERELY SUMMARIZE THE PLOT**
6. Each RESPONSE **must be at least 60 words** (include word count **at the end of at least one of the two responses for each book.**)
7. Write down your thoughts, questions, insights, and ideas **while you read or immediately after reading a chapter** so the information is fresh.
8. After you take notes, you should regularly reread the previous pages of notes and comments
9. First person is acceptable in the RESPONSE column
10. Remember the quotations do not have to be dialogue!
11. **Yes, this journal is to be done by hand AND using blue or black ink.** To ensure neatness, I would suggest that you use only one side of the paper

Sample Journal:

The Things They Carried by Tim O'Brien

TEXT	RESPONSE
<p>“They carried all they could bear, and then some, including a silent awe for the terrible power of the things they carried” (O’Brien 7)</p> <p><i>(This is a sample of an “A” response)</i></p>	<p>O’Brien depicts both the emotional and physical burdens of war on the young men. He repeats the clause “they carried” both at the beginning and the end of the sentence. This use of epanalepsis emphasizes the phrase “they carried” demonstrating that the men will never be free of their burdens. Also, in the middle of the sentence, there is a brief interjection (and then some). This pause contributes to the imagery of the men struggling to shoulder the weight of war. These men are marching up the mountains, and the interruption signals a moment of physical exhaustion, a moment during which they pause to catch their breath. However, it also signals a moment of mental strain when the men realize the things they carry have a “terrible” power. In this context, the word means extreme in extent or degree. However, the word connotes something awful or shocking. Thus, while the implements of war have this terrible power to kill, they have an even greater effect on the men who carry them, who will become killers, and who will have to bear this burden on their consciences. (186 words)</p>

The Things They Carried by Tim O'Brien

TEXT	RESPONSE
<p>“They carried like freight trains; they carried it on their backs and shoulders-and for all the ambiguities of Vietnam, all the mysteries and unknowns, there was at least the single abiding certainty that they would never be at a loss for things to carry” (O’Brien 2).</p> <p><i>(This is a sample of an “C+/B-” response)</i></p>	<p>O’Brien chooses to end the first section of the novel with this sentence. He provides excellent visual details of what each soldier in Vietnam would carry for day-to-day fighting. He makes you feel the physical weight of what soldiers have to carry for simple survival. When you combine the emotional weight of loved ones at home, the fear of death, and the responsibility for the men you fight with, with this physical weight, you start to understand what soldiers in Vietnam dealt with every day. This quote sums up the confusion that the men felt about the reasons they were fighting the war, and how they clung to the only certainty - things they had to carry - in a confusing world where normal rules were suspended. (128 words)</p>

Grading

Ten (10) Textual Entries – meaningful passage and correct citation format _____ / 10

Responses – thoughtful and insightful interpretations and commentaries, and thoroughly addresses all parts of the text (4 points each) _____ / 40

**Please note: In the directives for the RESPONSE column, the response choices in bold print (G – K) are considered HIGHER LEVEL questions; therefore, more frequent use or focus on those responses are more worthy of an A/B assessment than those that are not bolded (A-F).*

Total _____ /50