

Sophomore Honors English Summer Project

Students learn best when that learning is continuous. The summer assignment is intended to bridge skills from Freshman Honors to Sophomore Honors. Your work will build on prior learning as you explore the text and complete the accompanying writing assignment in preparation for the beginning of sophomore year.

The link below will take you to the on-line text.

<http://ziveuniverzity.sk/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Foster-How-to-Read-Literature-Like-a-Professor.pdf>

How to Read Literature Like a Professor

A Lively and Entertaining Guide to Reading Between the Lines by Thomas C. Foster

Understanding literature needs no longer be a mystery -- Thomas Foster's book will help transform you from a naive, sometimes confused Watson to an insightful, literary Holmes. Professors and other informed readers see symbols, archetypes, and patterns because those things are there -- if you have learned to look for them. As Foster says, you learn to recognize the literary conventions the "same way you get to Carnegie Hall. Practice."

****DEFINITION:** "Discuss" means at least one paragraph and one example. Be specific! Fully answer the question, and provide one definition and one literary example for each section. Follow the directions for the assignment. Please label your responses by chapter number and Foster's chapter title (i.e. Chapter 3: Nice to Eat You—Acts of Vampires). With each response, you must include the title of the novel/film and the author (cited correctly, which means the novel/film title is italicized).

Another Important Note: A LOT of Honors and A.P. teachers have their students read this book; thus, A LOT of students have performed similar tasks. **DO NOT** go searching the internet for examples to complete this assignment. You may not use examples from Foster, either. This project should be completed entirely by you. YOU. Yourself. Alone. No help.

The project is due on the first day of class.

Note to students: Choose six of the following chapters from Foster's book. These short writing assignments will let you practice your literary analysis and they will help me get to know you and your literary tastes. Whenever I ask for an example from literature, you may use short stories, novels, plays, or films (Yes, a film is a literary genre). Please note that your responses should be paragraphs -- not pages! (This assignment needs to be typed. Times Roman, 12 font, double spaced.)

Introduction: How did He Do That?

How do memory, symbol, and pattern affect the reading of literature? How does the recognition of patterns make it easier to read complicated literature? Discuss a time when your appreciation of a literary work was enhanced by understanding symbol or pattern.

Chapter 1 -- Every Trip Is a Quest (Except When It is Not)

List the five aspects of the QUEST and then apply them to something you have read (or viewed).

Chapter 5 -- Now, Where Have I Seen Her Before?

Define intertextuality. Discuss three examples that have helped you in reading specific works. How have works played off each other (i.e. Lion King is the story of Hamlet)?

Chapter 6 -- When in Doubt, It's from Shakespeare...

Discuss a work that you are familiar with that alludes to or reflects Shakespeare. Show how the author uses this connection thematically.

Chapter 8 -- Hansel and Gretel

Think of a work of literature that reflects a fairy tale. Discuss the parallels. (again, this can't actually be a fairy tale). Does it create irony or deepen appreciation?

Interlude -- Does He Mean That?

Chapter 12 -- Is That a Symbol?

Use the process described in the chapter and investigate the symbolism in a work of literature. (Remember: symbols are not always objects; actions and events can be symbols, too). Are English teachers just making this stuff up? Describe a time when a symbol stood out to you in a novel. What was the effect of your understanding on the novel as a whole?

Chapter 15 -- Flights of Fancy

Select a literary work in which flight signifies escape or freedom. Explain in detail.

Chapter 19 -- Geography Matters...

Discuss at least four different aspects of a specific literary work that Foster would classify under "geography".

Interlude -- One Story

Write your own definition for an archetype. Then identify an archetypal story, and apply it to a literary work with which you are familiar.

Chapter 23 -- It's Never Just Heart Disease... Select a character with a heart problem ("disease") and analyze its implications for characterization.

Chapter 24 -- ...And Rarely Just Illness

Recall two characters who died of a disease in a literary work. Consider how these deaths reflect the "principles governing the use of disease in literature". Discuss the effectiveness of the death as related to plot, theme, or symbolism.

Chapter 25 -- Don't Read with Your Eyes

After reading Chapter 25, choose a scene or episode from a novel, play or epic written before the twentieth century. Contrast how it could be viewed by a reader from the twenty-first century with how it might be viewed by a contemporary reader. Focus on specific assumptions that the author makes; assumptions that would not make it in this century.

Chapter 26 -- Is He Serious? And Other Ironies

Select an ironic literary work, and explain the multi-vocal nature of the irony in the work.

Chapter 27 -- Test

Choose a work of literature, and answer key questions as you read and follow the rules for analysis. Remember to look at patterns and allusions as you read. Your analysis may not resemble anyone else's, but as long as you can support it with the text and logic, you are correct.