

English IV – World Literature Summer Reading

"My heart is afraid that it will have to suffer," the boy confides to the alchemist one night as they look up at a moonless night.
"Tell your heart that the fear of suffering is worse than the suffering itself," the alchemist replies. "And that no heart has ever suffered when it goes in search of its dreams, because every second of the search is a second's encounter with God and with eternity." – *The Alchemist*, Paolo Coelho

The point is, to live everything. Live the questions now. Perhaps you will then gradually, without noticing it, live along some distant day into the answer. —Rainer Maria Rilke

Overview - World Literature in its simplest definition refers to literature from all over the world. It is literatures from all places and all times which are diverse and have a depth of meaning that speaks beyond the culture in which it originated. These literatures, using a variety of genres, discuss ideas, issues, and topics that reinforce our common human nature – our hopes and fears, revealing how we think, how we live, and how we die. They provide opportunities for us to explore other cultures and ethnicities in a true spirit of expanding our awareness and understanding of others, not only to find and categorize how we are different, but also to recognize how we are the same. In World Literature, we build on the foundations laid in the Survey of Literature, American Literature, and British Literature courses. These courses introduced the literary, moral, and intellectual sources which form the heart of our country and have shaped who we are today and whose collective roots are found in the Western tradition. As a nation of immigrants who have banded together to become Americans, it is also important for us to know and appreciate the richness of the Western tradition, but to also become acquainted with and appreciate the richness of literatures representative of non-Western traditions.

Genres in World Literature are like genres in American and British literature – they represent categories based on form, style, or subject matter into which artistic works of all kinds can be divided. Themes in World Literature cover a wide range of ideas, issues, and topics that tell the story of human experience from the perspective of a particular time and place, i.e., a culture or nation.

In World Literature, you are expected to engage in conversation about ideas through books by both classic and contemporary authors. You are expected to annotate your texts i.e. reflect about the ideas, issues, and topics revealed through the literature. The literature you will read is intended to provoke a conversation between you, the authors, and their characters. The goal of this summer's reading is to initiate you into this conversation.

Summer Assignment Requirements - Each student must do the following: psychologist

College Essay: Bring a draft or rewrite of one of your college essays. If you have a draft with comments on it, please rewrite it, and bring it and your revision with you on the first day of class.

Personal Essays: Write TWO personal analytical essays on one of the guided questions on the list below. Each essay should be one to two pages in length and include at least TWO direct quotations from summer reading. The essays should respond directly to the guiding question using your interpretation of the text and the textual evidence as support for your personal claims.

Reading Assignment: Purchase the following two books - *The Alchemist* by Paolo Coelho and *No Exit* by Jean-Paul Sartre. Read the books and take notes, journal, text code and/or annotate as needed to help you do well on an in-class essay on these books. These notes are for you: we will not collect or evaluate them.

Guiding Questions for Reading:

1. How does literature define who we are?
2. What is the value of literature?
3. Why does literature reflect society?
4. How and when is reading a liberating experience?
5. Why does literature challenge a reader's beliefs, values, and assumptions?
6. How does literature excite the senses?
7. How does the author's style and technique create literature that instructs, educates, seduces, and/or possesses the reader?
8. How does literature ignite the power of art?
9. How does literature function, e.g., memoir, literary criticism, social history, storytelling, etc.?
10. To what extent does the function of literature affect its ability to shape and transform the lives of people?