**AP Literature Summer Reading Assignments**

**Mr. Dave Fulton**

**David.fulton@appo.k12.de.us**

**Course Description**

AP English Literature and Composition is a rigorous college-level course that will give students a learning experience equivalent to a typical undergrad introduction to literature class. The reading and writing is frequent and challenging; the course requires independent thinking. Through close reading of literary texts, students will come to understand how writers use language to provide meaning and to answer the big questions in life. We will “measure” literature against the history of philosophy to understand how literature fits into its own time as well as in all time. Our literary analysis will look through the lenses of style and structure, diction, figurative language, imagery, selection of detail, language, and syntax. Vocabulary study is important. Students will also master literary terms. Writing well about literature is a key component of the class. In addition to writing a variety of essays, students will keep a writing log over the course of the year to document their writing. It is expected that students will take the AP English exam in May. Students should check with various colleges to see what credits they offer for the test.

**Methods of Instruction**

The class will focus on class discussion, some lecture, group and individual presentations, style and literary analysis of various works and writing/vocabulary/analytical skills. You should take notes each day, for tests and quizzes will cover notes and reading assignments. Also, thoughtful and detailed notes provide valuable ideas and support for essays. Do not merely take notes on what I say; take notes on what your peers say as well. Student leadership roles and participation in class discussions are vital to the quality of learning for which we are all responsible.

**What to expect from AP Literature:**

* Nightly reading of approximately 50 pages. Many times you will be reading a novel/drama while we are working on a different novel in class, so organization is a priority in your note taking.
* A written composition approximately every 3 class sessions.
* An AP Response every Friday Class (these will be graded on the AP Scoring Rubric)
* Classroom forums/discussions in which ALL students are expected to participate.

**Texts:**

* *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley - Text will be provided by Mr. Fulton
* *How to Read Literature Like a Professor*  by Thomas Foster – Student must purchase his/her own copy (between 8-11 dollars).
* *Barron’s AP English Literature and Composition 5thth ed.* (13-16 dollars)

**\***Other readings will be provided by the school throughout the school year. A comprehensive list of novels/readings will be provided the first day of class.

**Frankenstein Summer Reading Assignment**

**Part I** (Due in class on the first day of school): Every student will read *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley and *How to Read Literature Like a Professor* by Thomas Foster. Foster’s book will help you to understand the novel better. \*Reminder you will have to purchase *How to Read Literature Like a Professor*.

A. Before you read Frankenstein:

* Read “The Rime of the Ancient Mariner” by Samuel Taylor Coleridge. This poem is public domain but the best website to go for reading is <http://www.bartleby.com/101/549.html> as it offers some notes to assist in understanding.
* Then Read Chapter 21 of *How to Read Literature Like a Professor* to see what is written about *Frankenstein*

B. After you read Frankenstein: Apply the following chapters from Foster’s book to Frankenstein.

* Chapter 1—“Every Trip Is a Quest”
* Chapter 7— “…or The Bible”
* Chapter 9 — “It’s Greek to Me” (think Prometheus)
* Chapter 10—“It’s More Than Just Rain or Snow”
* Chapter 11—“…More Than It’s Gonna Hurt You: Concerning Violence”
* Chapter 12—“Is That a Symbol?”
* Chapter 19—“Geography Matters…”
* Chapter 20—“…So Does Season”
* Chapter 25—“Don’t Read with Your Eyes”

Respond to each chapter by writing a well-developed paragraph that explains the main points Foster is making and show how they apply to Frankenstein (150 word minimum). Include at least two specific textual examples (at least one of which is a direct quote from the novel) that show how Mary Shelley is using the technique or idea discussed in Foster’s chapter

**Part II** - As the work of close study progresses in class, students should use a reading journal to note references and consider the following: **(note: there is not enough room in these charts for your notes and personal comments – you will need to keep a separate journal, I will put an electronic version of this document on the school website).**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Thematic concerns** | **Notes and personal comments** |
| Dreams and their significance |  |
| Creativity |  |
| Women and their role as nurturers and creators of life (a feminist reading would look at the way  Frankenstein tries to usurp the role of women and is punished) |  |
| Obsession (it is often said that Mary Shelley’s book – especially the later 1834 edition- is a response to the obsessive state that captured P. Shelley during his creative periods.) |  |
| Science and its role at the time |  |
| Physiognomy – one of the beliefs of the period was in physiognomy: that you could tell a man’s character from his face. This is clearly present in Dracula by which time this notion was popular. Is this relevant in this text? |  |
| A strong tenet in Romanticism was the insistence on the purity of man in a state of innocence. All men were born with the capacity for good but forces around them produced evil.  Consider the creation of the monster. How is this belief reflected in the monster? |  |
| Consider the subplot of the Turk. What prejudices about the Muslim religion emerge through these scenes? |  | |
| Literature and its influence – what books does the monster read? Consider the notes given on the writers and the texts mentioned. How does the monster react to these texts? |  | |
| From his reading the monster learnt of “the division of property, of immense wealth and squalid poverty; of rank, descent and noble blood”. In a Marxist analysis, the critic looks at the marginalized in the text, especially those disempowered by lack of wealth. What would you focus on to produce a Marxist analysis of this text? |  | |
| The role of psychology in the text. How relevant is Godwin’s idea about the creation of the criminal mind. Why does the monster become a Monster? |  | |
| The sublime in nature is always present. Locate some significant scenes. What role does the scenic play in this text? |  | |
| Read carefully the entreaties of the monster. What important claim is he making about life? |  | |

THE INTRODUCTION

Tracing the opening quotation:

*Did I ask thee Maker from my clay*

*To mould Me man? Did I solicit thee*

*From darkness to promote me? Paradise Lost (X 743-5)*

In this quotation Adam is addressing his God (his maker). The quote Mary Shelley uses is written by Milton who wrote *Paradise Lost* (1667) and *Paradise Regained* (1671). *Paradise Lost* is a book length poem about the Fall of Man.

1. What is Adam asking?
2. What is the Darkness to which he is referring?
3. How are we expected to feel about God from this passage?
4. What does this quotation suggest about Mary Shelley’s monster?

Introductions to novels are always important. In the introduction the author sets up what is to come, establishes a sense of character and introduces a complication. There are four letters sent by Walton to his sister, the fourth letter written over a few days. Consider what is revealed about Walton in each letter.

1. What are his aims?
2. What does he value? (Consider education, solitude, obsession and dreams).
3. Trace the religious references and determine what they add to the text.
4. How does he react to Victor Frankenstein?
5. In letter 1 he refers to Homer and Shakespeare, in letter 2 he refers to Coleridge’s Rime of the Ancient Mariner. What is the relevance of these references? What do they reveal about Walton?
6. In letter 4 what is it that alerts Victor Frankenstein to his similarity to Walton when he says: “Do you share my madness?”

The letters may seem a distraction from the main plot but they serve to foreground many important ideas and to show that what Frankenstein did was not an isolated act. Summarize what these letters reveal about creative genius and the desire for glory.

In Chapter 15 of *Frankenstein*, the monster reads *Paradise Lost* which “excited different and far deeper emotions”:

*It moved every feeling of wonder and awe that the picture of an omnipotent God*

*warring with his creatures was capable of exciting. …Like Adam, I was apparently*

*united by no link to any other being in existence: but his state was far different from*

*mine in every respect. He had come forth from God’s hands a perfect creature, happy*

*and prosperous, guided by the especial care of his Creator …but I was wretched,*

*helpless and alone. Many times I considered Satan as the fitter emblem of my*

*condition, for often, like him, when I viewed the bliss of my protectors, the bitter gall of*

*envy rose in me.”*

1. How is the monster similar to Satan?
2. In what way(s) is the monster different?
3. What makes him wretched?

CHARACTERIZATION

Look at the characters of: Walton, Victor Frankenstein, Clerval, Elizabeth, Victor’s parents, and the monster and build up a character profile considering the following:

* + Characters are revealed in their descriptions and the clothing they wear. Initial descriptions can change as the character faces challenges or grows
  + Characters are revealed by the setting they are in and their reaction to different settings
  + Characters can be understood by looking at their relationship with others.
  + Characters are revealed in what others say about them.
  + Characters are revealed by their own thoughts.
  + Characters can be revealed by their actions
  + Characters can be revealed from what they read
  + Characters can be revealed through their choice of words.
  + Often characters are constructed to represent a particular type of person or an idea. In this novel one of the key ideas is obsession – consider how the characters of Walton, Victor Frankenstein and Clerval serve to illustrate aspects of this idea.
  + Compare Victor Frankenstein’s relationship to his parents with his relationship to his creation.

SETTING

This novel covers many different settings and each setting is important in the text. Complete this table.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Setting** | **Description** | **Effect on Character or Plot** |
| Home in Geneva |  |  |
| University of Ingolstadt |  |  |
| The ship |  |  |
| The de Lacey’s cottage in Germany |  |  |
| England |  |  |
| The mountains near home |  |  |

This novel is very much an international novel. Victor’s family travels to many different places before they settle. Victor himself is always on the move. The de Lacey family has connections to Turkey through Safie.

Consider the type of world they inhabit.

Are there any barriers?

What do we do when all earthly places have been found?

Where does the spirit of adventure and enquiry take us?

LANGUAGE AND STYLE

**Techniques**

Novels convey their meaning through language - that is the choice and arrangement of words – so it is important to locate the techniques employed AND to connect the techniques with the process of meaning.

Students should gather information for the following question and the table below.

**How does the use of a particular technique convey characterization/ ideas/ mood/ or any other effect?**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Technique** | **Examples** | **Effect** |
| First person narration |  |  |
| Letters |  |  |
| Dialogue |  |  |
| Rhetorical questions |  |  |
| Sublime descriptions |  |  |
| Religious allusions |  |  |
| Gothic references |  |  |
| Metaphors |  |  |
| Dreams |  |  |
| Repetition of the word “loathing” |  |  |
| Absence of a name for the monster |  |  |
| Pathetic fallacy |  |  |

**Literary Allusions**

Mary Shelley’s audience would have been well read and conscious of the texts and myths to which she referred. Consider each of the following literary allusions in Frankenstein and think of how her audience would have been influenced by these ideas.

To complete the table, students should

* locate the references,
* research them to explain what they mean in the context and
* explain how Shelley positions the audience to a particular set of beliefs, attitudes and values.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Allusion** | **Brief explanation** | **Positioning of readers** |
| Milton’s *Paradise Lost*  Epigram & Ch 15 |  |  |
| Promethean myth – creation – fire  Ch 16 , 23 etc |  |  |
| “The Rime of the Ancient Mariner”  Letter 2, Ch 5 |  |  |
| PB Shelley’s poem “Mutability” Ch 10 |  |  |
| *Sorrows of Werther*  Ch 15 |  |  |
| Plutarch  Ch 15 |  |  |
| Volney’s *Ruins of Empires* |  |  |
| Wordsworth’s “Tintern Abbey”  Ch 18 |  |  |

Using the information in the table, write a paragraph explaining how allusions affect the meaning of the text, *Frankenstein*.

PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

***Frankenstein***

*“Do your duty towards me, and I will do mine towards you and the rest of mankind.”*

When faced by his Father, the monster reminds Frankenstein of his duty as a father with these words. The parent/child relationship is seen as a reciprocal one. Good conduct from the father leads to good conduct from the child. This idea was very much part of Mary Shelley’s world view. Both her parents had very strong social sensibilities and had written about the responsibility of the state to the people and the parent to the child. Her father William Godwin was conscious of the importance of upbringing in the development of good human beings when he wrote:

*What is born into the world is an unfinished sketch, without character or decisive feature impressed upon it. There is for the most part no essential difference between the child of the lord and of the porter. ..Various external accidents, unlimited as to the period of their commencement, modify in different ways the elements of the animal frame. Everything in the universe is linked and united together.*

Godwin, W. The characters of men originate in their external circumstances, Political Justice, 1793

Mary Shelley’s mother voiced her concerns about upbringing even more explicitly, declaring that: *A great proportion of the misery that wanders in hideous forms around the world is allowed to rise from the negligence of parents.*

Wollestonecroft, M. A Vindciation of the Rights of Women, Chapter XII Duty to Parents

Frankenstein’s nameless creature looks like a monster and acts like a monster but doesn’t always speak like a monster. Frankenstein creates a monster whose appearance is so frightening that he runs from his own creation. From there follows a sorry tale of an abandoned “child” who wanders the countryside, seeking companionship and love. This “child” has within him the capacity to learn and is able to miraculously read about the world from the greatest of texts, from Milton to Werther and others. Unfortunately his appearance frightens others just as it did his creator; alone and deserted he turns on his maker’s family and sets out to destroy all that Frankenstein loves. Murder and violence confirm Frankenstein’s belief that he has created a monster and yet the reality is that Frankenstein has to accept responsibility for his actions.

Look at the following quotes about family from Frankenstein.

* Locate who says each
* Consider what ideas each quote develops about the parent and the child.
* Compose a response to this statement, using the quotes and any other evidence you locate:

**Ultimately Frankenstein is about the responsibility of the parent to the child**

Elizabeth’s father exerted himself to obtain the liberty of his country. He became the victim of its weakness – obsession leading to the breakdown of a family (Chapter one)

My parents were possessed by the very spirit of kindness and indulgence. …when I mingled with other families I distinctly discerned how peculiarly fortunate my lot was and gratitude assisted the development of filial love. (Chapter two)

A new species would bless me as its creator and source; many happy and excellent natures would owe their being to me. No father could claim the gratitude of his child so completely as I should deserve theirs.(Chapter 4)

How can I describe my emotions at this catastrophe, or how delineate the wretch whom with such infinite pains and care I had endeavoured to form? His limbs were in proportion, and I had selected his features as beautiful. Beautiful!--Great God! His yellow skin scarcely covered the work of muscles and arteries beneath; his hair was of a lustrous black, and flowing; his teeth of a pearly whiteness; but these luxuriances only formed a more horrid contrast with his watery eyes, that seemed almost of the same colour as the dun white sockets in which they were set, his shriveled complexion and straight black lips. (Chapter 5)

You, my creator, abhor me; what hope can I gather from your fellow-creatures, who owe me nothing? they spurn and hate me. ( Chapter 10)

For the first time, also, I felt what the duties of a creator towards his creature were, and that I ought to render him happy before I complained of his wickedness (Chapter 10)

I heard of the difference of sexes; and the birth and growth of children; how the father doted on the smiles of the infant, and the lively sallies of the older child; how all the life and cares of the mother were wrapped up in the precious charge; how the mind of youth expanded and gained knowledge; of brother, sister, and all the various relationships which bind one human being to another in mutual bonds. (Chapter 13)

Like Adam, I was apparently united by no link to any other being in existence; but his state was far different from mine in every other respect. He had come forth from the hands of God a perfect creature, happy and prosperous, guarded by the especial care of his Creator; he was allowed to converse with, and acquire knowledge from, beings of a superior nature: but I was wretched, helpless, and alone as the fitter emblem of my condition; for often, like him, when I viewed the bliss of my protectors, the bitter gall of envy rose within me. God, in pity, made man beautiful and alluring, after his own image; but my form is a filthy type of yours, more horrid even from the very resemblance. Satan had his companions, fellow-devils, to admire and encourage him; but I am solitary and abhorred. (Chapter 15)

Consider also the role of other parents in the text: Safie’s and Justine’s parents; Frankenstein’s

mother; the woodcutter.

THE NATURAL WORLD AND THE UNNATURAL

**Mary Shelley and the sublime**

Mary Shelley grew up at a time when nature was being lauded by the Romantics. Landscapes had the capacity to fill the senses with wonder, with awe. There was a consciousness of the greatness of nature against the smallness of man.

"The passion caused by the great and sublime in nature . . . is Astonishment; and astonishment is that state of the soul, in which all its motions are suspended, with some degree of horror. In this case the mind is so entirely filled with its object, that it cannot entertain any other."

Edmund Burke Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful in Wu, Romanticism, Blackwell Publishers

The sublime refers to the effect of nature on the human - the beauty or terror of the scene creates a sense of awe in the observer. This power of nature to transport the senses was therefore manifested not only as a positive force but also as fear. Mary Shelley prefaces many of her chapters with an exploration of the scene as an immense and overwhelming presence. It seems quite appropriate then that the beautiful regions of the alps where Frankenstein walks to relieve himself of the pain of all the tragedies that have befallen him, is also the place where he comes upon his creation. In this way the sublime can be enacted as the full range of emotions.

Look at the following extracts and answer the questions that follow for each Extract.

**Extract One - Chapter 7**

From: I quitted my seat, and walked on, although the darkness and storm increased every minute,

To: Alas! I had turned loose into the world a depraved wretch, whose delight was in carnage and misery; had he not murdered my brother?

**Extract Two - Chapter 9**

From: I completed the first part of my journey on horseback I afterwards hired a mule

To: But it was augmented and rendered sublime by the mighty Alps, whose white and shining pyramids and domes towered above all, as belonging to another earth, the habitations of another race of beings.

**Extract Three - Chapter 10**

From: I spent the following day roaming through the valley. I stood beside the sources of the Arveiron,

To:I suddenly beheld the figure of a man, at some distance, advancing towards me with superhuman speed. He bounded over the crevices in the ice, among which I had…

1. Find 5 adjectives used to describe each scene and determine whether they carry positive or negative connotations
2. Find emotive words. Locate the exact element of the scene that causes this emotion (cause and effect)
3. Find references to the senses. Which sense is most prominent?
4. How does imagery of light and dark work in the text? What connotations does this binary opposition hold?
5. Find ten poetic figures of speech such as metaphors, personification and similes and explain how each works in the extracts.
6. Pathetic fallacy is a term coined by Ruskin who criticized the way nature was personified as if having emotions. This connection with feelings (pathos) was a fallacy (misunderstanding). An example would be when Autumn is represented as a woman. Find an example of the use of a pathetic fallacy and explain its function in the text.
7. Find references to a sense of God. What role does God have in each scene?
8. Find any Gothic references and determine their role in this part of the text. What would Gothic references have suggested to Shelley’s contemporary audience?
9. What has happened before the extract? What happens after the extract? In what way is this extract pivotal to the action?
10. What is the mood of each extract. How is this mood created?