

Advanced Placement Literature and Composition is designed with the intent to *replace* an introductory college-level literature course. Therefore, the expectations for your performance are quite high. Please read the following summer reading instructions carefully.

Reading and Annotating

It is recommended that you obtain your own copies of the assigned summer reading so that you can annotate in the books. Limited copies are also available through the school. Inexpensive copies in good condition can be obtained at www.amazon.com and www.half.com.

Note-taking will ensure that you arrive in class with specific details and ideas at your disposal. The close reading will also aid you in your preparation for the AP exam. Feel free to use sticky notes if you do not buy your own text.

The texts

Read the texts in the following order:

1. *King Lear*, William Shakespeare. Often considered Shakespeare's bleakest play, this tragedy is unrelenting in its examination of betrayal and the ravages of age, as well as its portrayal of familial dysfunction.

Do not use a side-by-side translated edition.

THIS BOOK MUST BE READ FIRST!

2. *A Thousand Acres*, Jane Smiley. This Pulitzer Prize-winning novel is a modern adaptation of and a response to *King Lear*. While some of the themes may initially seem unrelated to Shakespeare's play, take a closer look; you will discover new insights into both works. There are some strong scenes that are difficult to read, but that is exactly Smiley's point. Consider why Smiley would write such a stark portrayal of traumatic events - this is not for gratuitous or sensational purposes.

3. *Hamlet*, William Shakespeare. This tragedy is vital for the understanding of and comparison to *King Lear*. Also, there are many references to Hamlet on the AP Lit test, so it is imperative that you have read it. If you have taken English III Honors, please refresh your memory of the play with annotations. If you are coming from AP Lang, you are required to read and annotate the play.

Assessment of Summer Reading

1. You will take an objective analysis test on *King Lear* sometime during the week of September 13th.

2. You will submit a comparative essay on *King Lear* and *A Thousand Acres* via Turnitin on Tuesday, September 13th, (due date is subject to change depending on the schedule rotation).

Your essay should address the following:

✓ A theme that appears in both works

✓ *A Thousand Acres'* treatment of the theme as a response to *Lear*; this is why you

must read *Lear* first!

✓ The effect of Smiley's work and how it is achieved.

3. The assessment and classwork for Hamlet will happen at the end of September, so you have a little more time to complete your annotations. However, do not wait until the last minute because you will have other work to do in the meantime.

Essay guidelines

Be sure that your essay fulfills the following requirements:

- Must adhere to MLA formatting and citation guidelines - essays not in MLA will not be graded
- Must be a minimum of 5 pages in length, not including the works cited page
- Must be structured around a clear, unequivocal thesis statement
- Arguments must be supported with appropriate textual evidence
- Analysis should address literary elements and devices
 - Must incorporate literary criticism/critical articles is required, but your own argument is paramount.
 - Check the Library Media Center databases for sources:
<https://www.mackinvia.com/dashboard>
Login: select Lawrence High School NJ
Username and password: lawrencehs
- Should be virtually free of grammar and usage errors

Staying connected

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