

# HONORS BRITISH LITERATURE

## Summer Reading Assignment



Welcome to Honors British Literature!

The FCS Honors British Literature class examines texts from a variety of time periods within the British Literature Canon in an effort to expand students' critical reading and writing skills.

The offered Summer Reading texts have been selected with the Honors British Literature course objectives in mind and will be assessed in a variety of ways within the first two weeks of the school year. There are two parts to the Summer Reading Assignment. Please read each part carefully and take note of all due dates.

The first part of the Summer Reading Assignment involves choosing a first Book Club text. Book Clubs will run throughout the school year congruently with the assignments students are given as a whole class. More information will come as the year begins, but part of choosing a book this summer includes choosing the thematic track of your book club experience.

The two tracks are as follows:

**Track A:** The human condition as studied through works from the dystopian/science fiction genres.

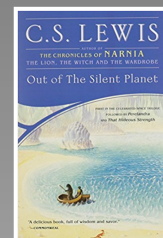
**Track B:** The clashing British socio-economic classes as studied through various works of 20th century fiction.

## Part 1: Book Club

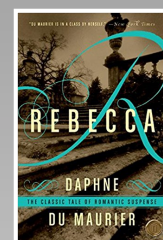
**Step 1:** Select a novel from the Book Club Reading List...

Choose ONE novel from the following book list and then complete Steps 2 and 3 on the next page.

### Book Club Reading List



**Track A:**  
**Out of the Silent Planet**  
By C. S. Lewis



**Track B:**  
**Rebecca**  
By Daphne Du Maurier

Reading is that fruitful miracle of a communication in the midst of solitude."  
-Marcel Proust

## Step 2: Significant Quotes Notebook

The significant quotes notebook is your opportunity to keep track of key moments within the novel you are reading. When completed, the notebook should read like a conversation between yourself and the novel.

These notebooks are to be completed by hand. Please note that **digital notebooks will NOT be accepted**.

On the left-hand side of the paper, copy quotations (with quotation marks) from the book that you think reveal something important about a character, theme, or symbol.

Keep these in the order they occur in the book. Remember to write down page numbers for each quotation.

On the right-hand side of the paper, directly opposite the quotation, write what you think the significance of the quote is in light of the character, theme, or symbol. In other words, what does this quote reveal about the character, theme, or symbol?

\*Keep quotations and your comments lined-up on the page to prevent confusion.

\*You should have at **least 25 quotes** from the novel, and they should represent the **full course** of the novel. Choose wisely.

\*\*A helpful hint...I'm not looking for huge quotations. I want to see that you are reading with a critical mind and are able to pick out some important ideas. I am also looking to see how your ideas might be different from your classmates', so please complete this assignment independently.

**DUE DATE: FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL, AUGUST 8<sup>th</sup>.**



"Polonius: What do you read, my lord?"

Hamlet: Words, words, words."

-William Shakespeare

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## Step 3: Prepare for an In-Class Essay

In addition to the Significant Quotes Notebook, students will write an in-class essay about their Book Club text on the first Tuesday of the school year. The best way to prepare for this essay is to read the book and complete the significant quotes notebook.

**DUE DATE: AUGUST 14<sup>th</sup>**

## Part 2: Book Talk

### Step 1:

Read ONE of the books on the "Important Works in British Literature" list at the end of this packet. The list is divided by time periods and the choices represent a wide range of texts that are significant to the formation of the British Literature Canon. Please note the ones marked with an asterisk as these contain some mature themes and language.

### Step 2:

Prepare a Book Talk to be given during the first week of school. The order of the Book Talks will be randomly compiled; therefore students should have their talk prepared the first day of class.

The goal of this assignment is to give you the opportunity to read a book of your choosing that you will enjoy.

Please do not confuse Book Talks with a book summary or a book report. Book Talks are brief "teasers" given enthusiastically as a way to entice others to read a particular book.

They are very similar to movie trailers, which show just enough information to convince you to watch. You will include some summary in your Book Talk, but consider this presentation as a persuasive speech, not just a report. You are trying to convince others to read this book.

Plan a three to four minute presentation that includes the title and author of the book and gives a brief summary, and then explain why you liked it and why other students might be interested in it.

You may also read a short excerpt from the book (maximum one page).

Use note cards to cue yourself during the presentation.

#### Tips:

1. Start off with an interesting quotation from the book to capture your audience's attention.
2. Be sure to clearly state the title of the book and the author's name at the beginning of your Book Talk.
3. Spend the majority of your time discussing the plot and conflict, but include setting, major characters, and a theme. Do NOT give away the ending!
4. Do not just list characters – remember this Book Talk is essentially a persuasive speech and it is not helpful to just read a list of names.
5. Have the book with you to use as a visual! You may also use PowerPoint or Prezi if you would like another visual aid.
6. Work on appropriate presentation skills: make eye contact, do not read your speech, use body language to communicate your message, speak loudly and clearly, etc.

**Sample Book Talk:**

“Human beings *can* be awful cruel to one another.”

These types of insights into human behavior are hidden gems in Mark Twain’s *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. Huck makes this particular observation as he watches two conmen, who have been tarred and feathered, carted off by the people they conned. And, while Huck himself had been conned by them, he feels pity for them. This theme of recognizing the evil that exists in people is one of the predominant themes in the book. On the surface, *Huck* is the story of a young boy who runs away from an abusive father, hooks up with a runaway slave, Jim, and floats along the Mississippi River, where they meet a cast of characters, including two feuding families with a Romeo-and-Juliet twist and the men who con Huck into believing that they are a King and Duke. Tom Sawyer also makes an appearance, acting as his typical self. But despite the perceived simplicity of the plot, the novel’s progressive ideas, biting humor and sarcasm, and reflections on society have made it one of the most popular American novels ever, despite also being one of the most controversial. Since publication, *Huck* has been deemed “inappropriate” for teenagers to read for one reason or another. Originally written as the sequel to the well-known children’s story *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, Huck’s story is meant for an adult audience ready to question the reality accepted so readily by others. It is the story of a society, our society, that allows children to be abused, that allows human beings to treat others as property, that allows violence without hesitation. But, it never preaches; in fact, the humor and naïveté of the narrator mask the seriousness of the narrative. Where else could two teenage boys rescue a captured runaway slave by digging him out of a hut simply because busting open the door wouldn’t make as good of a story? And who wouldn’t want to read this book: violence, crime, race relations, drama, and broken-hearted tragedy, it appeals to everyone.

(Thank you Ms. O’Connor from Glasgow High School)

### Rubric for Book Talk

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Excellent</b>	<b>Above Average</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>Below Average</b>
<i>Introduction attracts audience</i>	Exceptionally creative beginning with an excellent quotation; includes title and author	Creative beginning with a good quotation; includes title and author	Not a very creative or interesting beginning with a quotation; includes title or author	Not a very good beginning with no quotation; does not include title or author
<i>Maintains eye contact</i>	Always maintains eye contact and engages audience	Almost always maintains eye contact	Sometimes maintains eye contact	Never maintains eye contact
<i>Discusses the plot, setting, conflict, tone, and characters</i>	Thorough and interesting summary of these elements	Somewhat thorough and interesting summary of these elements	Average summary of the elements	Does not summarize these elements or is missing a component
<i>Discusses the theme</i>	Discusses theme and makes an educated argument to support and elaborates on the importance	Discusses theme but fails to elaborate on the importance	Discusses theme but is not supported or not very thorough in elaboration	Does not discuss theme or makes a very general statement about the theme
<i>Progression</i>	Presents ideas with logical sequencing and seamless transitions	Presents ideas and information in sequence with clear transitions	Occasional lapses in logical sequencing or lack of transition	Transition between ideas is not evident
<i>Effectiveness/ Projected Audience</i>	Enthusiastically and clearly explains what is enjoyable about the book and the audience most suited for the book	Explains what is enjoyable and identifies the best audience	Does not explain what is enjoyable about the book or the best audience	Does not explain what is enjoyable about the book and does not identify the best audience
<i>Conclusion makes us want to read the book (or not read the book)</i>	Very enticing conclusion – draws the listener to read the book	Somewhat interesting conclusion- listener might want to read the book	Concluded but did not draw the listener to read the book	Very boring conclusion or no conclusion at all
<i>Demonstrates enthusiasm for the book</i>	Very enthusiastic and knowledgeable	Somewhat enthusiastic and knowledgeable	Shows average enthusiasm and understanding	Not enthusiastic at all
<i>Audible/ Presence</i>	Voice is clear, words are pronounced correctly and tempo is good; excellent body language	Voice is mostly clear and audible; pronunciation is mostly correct; body language is not distracting	Sometimes hard to understand; common words mispronounced; body language is occasionally distracting or inappropriate	Speech is too soft, mumbled, or too fast/slow; distracting or inappropriate body language
<i>Visual aid/ Excerpt (optional)</i>	Visual aid is well done, colorful, and very helpful to the presentation.  Excerpt is engaging, explained, and of appropriate length	Visual aid is colorful and helpful to the presentation.  Excerpt is not engaging, not explained, or too long.	Visual aid is completed.  Excerpt is boring and not explained, or too long.	Visual aid is very poorly done.  Excerpt is boring, not explained, and too long.
<i>Stays within time limit</i>	Within time limit (3-4 minutes)			Too short or too long

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## Important Works in British Literature List

### **Middle English/Early Neoclassical Period (1300-1700):**

Any of William Shakespeare's plays except *Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, and *Romeo and Juliet*

Sir Gawain and the Green Knight (Simon Armitage translation)

Le Morte d'Arthur: Thomas Malory

The Pilgrim's Progress: John Bunyan

Doctor Faustus: Christopher Marlowe

### **Late Neoclassical/Romantic Period (1700-1830)**

Joseph Andrews: Henry Fielding

The Mysteries of Udolpho: Ann Radcliffe

The Monk: Matthew Lewis\*

Persuasion: Jane Austen

Pride and Prejudice: Jane Austen

Pamela: Samuel Richardson

Moll Flanders: Daniel Defoe

Evelina: Fanny Burney

### **Victorian Period (1830-1900)**

Wuthering Heights by: Emily Bronte

Tess of the D'Urbervilles: Thomas Hardy\*

Great Expectations: Charles Dickens

A Tale of Two Cities: Charles Dickens

The Turn of the Screw: Henry James

The Woman in White: Wilkie Collins

The Tenant of Wildfell Hall: Anne Bronte

Silas Marner: George Eliot

Cranford: Elizabeth Gaskell

Dracula: Bram Stoker

### **Twentieth Century (1900-2000)**

A Room With A View: E.M. Forster

The Once and Future King: T. H. White

White Teeth: Zadie Smith\*

Mrs. Dalloway: Virginia Woolf

The Handmaid's Tale: Margaret Atwood\*

The Good Soldier: Ford Madox Ford\*

Heart of Darkness: Joseph Conrad

The Fellowship of the Ring: JRR Tolkien

The Silmarillion: JRR Tolkien

To The Lighthouse: Virginia Woolf\*

The Razor's Edge: Somerset Maugham

Never Let Me Go: Kazuo Ishiguro\*

Wide Sargasso Sea: Jean Rhys

I Capture the Castle: Dodie Smith\*

The Hitchhiker's Guide To the Galaxy: Douglas Adams

War Horse: Michael Morpurgo

The Shuttle: Frances Hodgson Burnett

The Pursuit of Love: Nancy Mitford

\*Denote works of a more mature nature that may need parent approval before selecting.