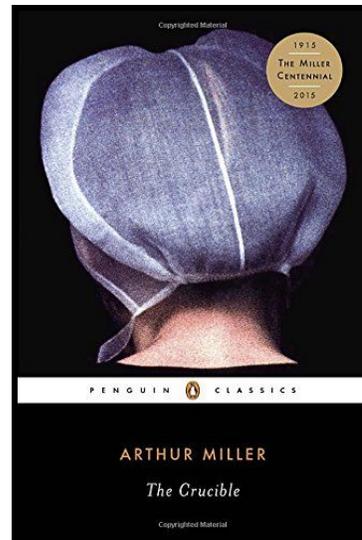
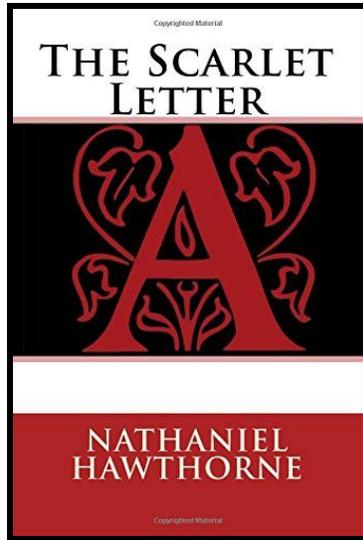


Honors American Literature

Summer Reading | Mrs. Mullis | christy.mullis@fcspaladins.org



Why do we read literature? I know—the question sounds rhetorical and obvious. But pause for a moment and seriously consider it. *Why do we read literature?* In an age of instant information funneled through a myriad of newsfeeds, timelines, and trending topics, has literature lost its edge? Has its relevance in our modern world faded?

Or is it we who have lost touch?

Literature has the power to be transformational to the core of our being—if we only pause and give it enough time and space to soak into us. This, of course, is not easy. We're used to snack-sized tweets, easily digestible Facebook updates, and—when a little more hungry—a blog post or two. We would do well, however, to regularly expand our palette to include great literary works. Not only does reading literature feed our minds, it also feeds our souls. In fact, [recent studies](#) have displayed a link between frequently reading fiction and fostering empathy—the ability to deeply understand and connect with other people. If reading literature plays such a crucial role in cultivating something as fundamental to our humanity as empathy, we need to take the time to open space for it in our lives. This summer, you have the opportunity to start doing just that. The two literary works you'll be starting a conversation with this summer are Arthur Miller's *The Crucible* and Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter*.

Assignments:

- Purchase the assigned texts
 - *The Crucible*- ISBN: 0142437336
 - *The Scarlet Letter*- ISBN: 1512090565
- Annotated Texts- 40 points (Bring your books to class)
- Written Essays- 60 points
- All work will be due at the beginning of class on the first day of school and will count for a **TEST GRADE**.
- Bring an electronic copy of your work to class on the first day of school. Your teacher will give you specific submission instructions at that point.

Annotations

The word *conversation* is used deliberately. Not only will you be allowing the texts to speak to you, but you will also be talking back. How do you have a conversation with a book? This conversation is accomplished through annotations. There is no single way to annotate a text. Here are some possible methods:

- When you read, highlight, underline, place symbols that will emphasize important literary components like characterization, setting, theme, turning points in the plot, etc.
- Star important ideas as you come across them in the text.
- Use a bright highlighter. The colors will serve as visual clues on the page that you will remember when you refer back and study.
- Place brackets around longer texts that would take too long to underline and make a note in the margin. Make many personal notes in the margin.
- Make a list of all the characters on the back of the front cover with brief ideas of characterization (such as appearance, personality, what they do, etc.)
- Write down questions and comments in the margin next to passages or that you do not understand (or write them on post-it notes and stick them to pages in your book).
- Make a list of key ideas on the inside of the back cover. Things like, timelines of events, changes in a character, ideas that you agree with or disagree with, and any personal responses that seem significant to you.

The method of annotating is unimportant compared to the thoughtfulness and intentionality behind your annotations. Consider, for example, some of David Foster Wallace’s [annotated inside covers](#) or [these pages](#) annotated by famous authors.

The quality of your own annotations will be assessed according to the following rubric:

Excellent: 30-40 pts	Good: 20-29 pts	Adequate: 10-19 pts	Inadequate: 0-9 pts
<p>— Text has been thoroughly annotated with meaningful questions, observations, and reflections of the content as well as the writing; variety of topics marked for discussion; variety of stylistic devices marked.</p> <p>—Comments demonstrate analysis and interpretation -thinking beyond the surface level of the text. Thoughtful connections made to other texts, or other events throughout the text.</p> <p>—Comments accomplish a great variety of purposes.</p> <p>—Consistent markings throughout text (not bunched).</p> <p>—Each chapter (or act) has several annotations.</p>	<p>—Text has been annotated reasonably well with questions, observations, and/or reflections of the content as well as the writing style.</p> <p>—Comments demonstrate some analysis and interpretation – thinking somewhat beyond the surface level of the text. Attempts at making connections.</p> <p>—Comments accomplish a variety of purposes.</p> <p>-Some lapses in entries exist or entries may be bunched.</p> <p>—Each chapter (or act) has at least three annotations.</p>	<p>—Text has been briefly annotated with questions, comments, observations, and/or reflections of the content or writing style.</p> <p>—Commentary remains mostly at the surface level. The commentary suggests thought in specific sections of the text rather than throughout.</p> <p>—Entries may be sporadic.</p> <p>—Each chapter (or act) has at least two annotations.</p>	<p>—Text has been briefly annotated.</p> <p>—Commentary is perfunctory. Little or no attempt to make connections.</p> <p>—Not all chapters (or acts) are annotated.</p>

Written Essays

Choose ONE prompt for both *The Crucible* and *The Scarlet Letter* (TWO total). Write 1 1/2-2 pages for each prompt.

Summer Work Requirements: Ensure that your writing is typed, double spaced, and in Times New Roman 12 pt. font. Be sure to meet proper essay expectations (fully developed paragraphs, sophisticated sentence level ideas, specific evidence from the text to support main ideas, and command of grammar, usage, mechanics, etc.). When using specific textual evidence, add parenthetical page number citations. Example: John Proctor lives outside of Salem (4). Only third person point of view should be used.

Be sure to include the four line MLA Heading at the top of the paper as per the norm for FCS English classes:

Your Name
Mrs. Mullis
Honors American Literature
8 August 2017

Prompts:

The Crucible

- A. Describe the internal conflict of the character John Proctor. Some questions to consider: What is the source, what is the progression of this inner conflict, and how is it resolved in the end? Is this resolution satisfying?
- B. How much is Abigail to blame for the events that took place? Is she a victim of her society? What events in her past and present influence her behavior? Can she be excused or pardoned because outside forces “made” her the way she is?

The Scarlet Letter

- A. Is Hester a strong female character? Could *The Scarlet Letter* be considered a feminist novel? Would Hester be advocated for by people in today’s society or would she be shunned nonetheless?
- B. Dimmesdale is a figure who preaches virtue from the pulpit and refuses to take his daughter’s hand in public but pays a terrible personal price for his actions. What points is Hawthorne trying to make about Puritan religion? To what degree is Dimmesdale responsible for his own actions and how much are the townsfolk responsible for forcing him into his position?

The quality of your essays will be assessed according to the following rubric (Familiarize yourself with the expectations laid out here as they will be the standard on which your writing will be measured throughout the year):

The A paper (Brilliant/Superior)

A+ = 60 pts, A = 57 pts, A- = 53 pts

- **Argument:** insightful, even thought-provoking point of view; makes novel connections among ideas
- **Thesis:** crystal clear, easily identifiable, logical, sophisticated
- **Evidence:** ample, even memorable; eloquently integrated into sentences
- **Analysis:** fresh, exciting, original; relates to topic sentences
- **Organization:** logical, understandable, appropriate, fluent
- **Topic sentences/transitions:** strong topic sentences; skillful, logical transitions that guide the reader through the writer’s thought process
- **Introduction:** hooks readers and gracefully introduces the topic

- **Conclusion:** concisely summarizes the topic, connects to the thesis, and strongly reaffirms a reader's investment in the topic
- **Diction:** powerful vocabulary, free of clichés and vague expressions
- **Syntax:** varied sentence structures; distinctive and fluent style

The B Paper (Good)

B + = 50 pts, B = 47 pts, B- = 43 pts

- **Argument:** sound point of view; goes beyond the obvious; logical, makes sense
- **Thesis:** coherent and succinct (to the point), but may be lacking in originality
- **Evidence:** sufficient to prove the argument; integrated into sentences
- **Analysis:** clear, relates to topic sentences, lacks the depth or originality of an A paper
- **Organization:** appropriate
- **Topic sentences/transitions:** evident topic sentences and transitions; transitions may list ideas
- **Introduction:** sufficiently introduces the topic
- **Conclusion:** concisely summarizes the topic, connects to the thesis
- **Diction:** appropriate to academic writing
- **Syntax:** correct sentence structures; clear style

The C Paper (Adequate/Borderline)

C + = 40 pts, C = 37 pts, C- = 33 pts

- **Argument:** may not go much beyond the obvious; faulty or unclear logic
- **Thesis:** may be unclear, appear unoriginal, or provide little basis for argument
- **Evidence:** may be insufficient, inappropriate, or unclearly developed; poorly integrated
- **Analysis:** may be obvious, superficial, simplistic, generic, or irrelevant
- **Organization:** often unclear, wandering or jumping from point to point
- **Topic sentences/transitions:** topic sentences are sometimes lacking; transitions are few or weak
- **Introduction:** may be too short, stray from the topic, or transition poorly to thesis
- **Conclusion:** may be irrelevant, inappropriate, or inconsistent
- **Diction:** average, simple, unvaried; sometimes incorrect
- **Syntax:** little sentence variation; sentence structure may be awkward

The High F Paper (Unsatisfactory/Makes an Effort)

High F = 30 pts

- **Argument:** no consistent point of view or one not worthy of arguing
- **Thesis:** difficult to identify, may be a bland restatement of an obvious point
- **Evidence:** very little or very weak; fails to support the topic sentences, improperly “plopped” into sentences
- **Analysis:** little or weak
- **Organization:** unclear, illogical
- **Topic sentences/transitions:** few to no topic sentences and transitions
- **Introduction:** lacking or has no relation to the paper
- **Conclusion:** lacking or has no relation to the paper
- **Diction:** simple or incorrect vocabulary that obscures
- **Syntax:** little or no sentence variation, or sentence structure is frequently awkward

The Low F Paper (Completely Fails to Meet Standards) Low F = 29 pts or below

- Does not address a topic under discussion
- Shows minimal lack of effort or comprehension of the assignment
- Is very difficult to understand due to major problems with mechanics, structure, and analysis
- Falls significantly short of the minimum length requirements
- Violates common standards of civility, decency, or decorum
- Is plagiarized

*** Strengths and/or weaknesses in the first five categories (argument, thesis, evidence, analysis) determine the basic grade level of the essay (A, B, C, or F), while strengths and/or weaknesses in the remaining categories primarily determine where the paper falls within that grade level.