

# MST Pre-AP English 10 Independent Reading Projects

Reading/listening to books and material you choose based on your interests is one of the most important keys (if not the most important) to your success in school and beyond. Outside reading increases your vocabulary, improves your general reading/writing skills and ability, increases your general knowledge, and allows you to develop the ability to appreciate diverse points of view through learning about other cultures and experiences. Above all, fiction in particular gives you a better foundation for understanding the human experience and condition, thus the opportunity to potentially live a richer life.

Each semester students will be assigned opportunities to earn credit for doing independent reading in either fiction or non-fiction (essays almost always require the use of fiction, however). For the purpose of variety, students will rotate through either writing a more traditional type essay OR creating a "product" based on one of choices below. Once an essay type or product has been created, students must try another type of assignment in their next venture. The end product will be assessed on overall effort/quality of the final product AND the use of evidence and critical thinking skills in its development.

## 1. READ A NOVEL (MUST BE FICTION) OUTSIDE OF CLASS AND WRITE AN ESSAY BASED ON ONE OF THE FOLLOWING CHOICES:

*Strive to include the hallmarks of good essay organization (consider the intro/outro style you use; follow the TS, Cx, Cd, Cm, etc. model we've studied in class). To be clear, the analysis/Cm of your evidence (the text you cite and analyze in support of your thesis/topic sentences) is a crucial component of this assignment.*

*The analysis length should be about 1,000 words, which is four or five, double-spaced pages. MLA format for citing text from the stories and sources, including your works cited, must be used. Use of scholarly outside resources is recommended but not required.*

*Note: visit the LIC to browse their selection of audiobooks available for checkout on iPods*

### **Language/Literary Device Analysis**

A language/literary device analysis is an expository piece in which you analyze an author's use of language/literary devices in moving plot forward, developing tone or thesis, etc. You could discuss the use of symbols, diction, setting, foreshadowing OR any combination of those and others not mentioned to support a thesis based on your interpretation of the author's purposeful use of language/devices in the story. However you decide to proceed, be sure to cite specific examples from the text. There should be a clear, analytical, and comprehensive thesis which previews your argument and takes a stand.

### **Comparative Analysis**

A comparative analysis is an expository piece in which you examine the parts of two things from different pieces of literature/media, making direct comparisons and analyses of how the two relate/don't relate to each other based on the analytical framework you reveal through your thesis. Avoid merely pointing out superficial plot or element differences/similarities. Consider taking a literary element or aspect of the work and attempt to attach your analysis to a larger context: development of a theme, analysis of a related current event/issue, etc. What you choose for comparison is up to you, but I'd be happy to give you some ideas if you're unsure how to proceed.

### **Biographical Analysis**

A biographical analysis is an expository piece in which you research the life of a particular author of fiction and look for connections and parallels from their life in their work. The premise driving the analysis is that the meaning of the work is largely reflective of the author's experiences, and that knowledge of the author's life can give key insights into the work's purpose and/or the author's choices. Who you choose and the work(s) you select for the biographical analysis are up to you, but I'd be happy to give you some ideas if you're unsure how to proceed.

2. READ A NOVEL (COULD BE EITHER FICTION/NON-FICTION) OUTSIDE OF CLASS AND CREATE A "PRODUCT" BASED ON FOLLOWING CHOICES:

Choose one of the following options and create a "product" related to your selected book:

- Gender bender: Rewrite a scene or two and change the gender of the characters to show how they might act differently (e.g., *Lord of Flies*). Include a separate, *brief* analysis at the end to highlight how why the bending of the gender affected the telling of the story.
- Host a talk show: students play the host, author, and cast of characters. Allow questions from the audience. Either perform live in front of the class or record it on video for presentation. Schedule performance with Mr. Greene.
- Watch a film inspired by a story (e.g., *Franny and Alexander* is inspired by *Hamlet*) and visually compare/contrast the two in a poster. Include captions and/or a separate write up that highlights the major similarities/differences and how why they possibly exist.
- Rewrite a scene or two, in the form of a story or journal, from the perspective of characters with no real role in the story. Show us what they see and think from their perspective.
- Write a scene or story in which the character(s) travel out of the book into a completely different setting or period.
- Have the character that most interests you write their brief autobiography of the time before, during, and/or after the story occurs.
- Select and do a live reading of outstanding sections of the book. You must include introduction/commentary that "frames" your selected pieces and clearly illustrates their collective point/purpose through your oral analysis.
- Design a series of comic strips depicting a major event, person, concept, or theme in the book. Include a brief but detailed analysis that reveals how the comic represents that author's purpose(s) or theme(s) in the story.
- Construct a diorama of a scene from the book. Include a brief but detailed plaque that reveals how the scene represents that author's purpose(s) or theme(s) in the story.
- Draw or paint a mural or create a sculpture to depict a scene, concept, person, or idea from the story. Include a brief but detailed analysis that reveals how the scene represents that author's purpose(s) or theme(s) in the story.
- Create a photo essay of a major event, person, concept, or theme in the book. Take pictures that represent the events, people, mood, etc. of the project focus. Include a written description of whom or what each picture represents. Use either captions or a short expository piece at the end to accomplish this.
- Prepare interview questions for a character from your story. Dress up as that person and have students ask you those questions in a class performance. To be clear, your answers to the questions need to be given as if YOU were that person from the story. Be sure to give some context and background on the story for the class members who haven't read it. This will allow them to "get" your answers and your interpretation of the character. If you'd rather do a video of the interview, feel free. Schedule performance/showing of the video with Mr. Greene.
- Impersonate a character from the story. Dress up as that person and tell their story to the class or on video in a dramatic, one man/woman performance. Be sure to give some context and background on the story for the class members who haven't read it. This will allow them to "get" your interpretation of the character and their story.
- Write a radio drama of an event in the story and either record it or perform it for class. Schedule performance with Mr. Greene.
- Create a ballad or song telling of a major event, person, concept, or theme in the book. Write your own lyrics and music or adapt words to the melody of a well-known tune. Perform your work in front of the class or on video. A simple written analysis of the product is required with this option. Schedule performance with Mr. Greene.
- Develop your own idea and get it approved.