

AP Literature Summer Reading Assignments (2026)

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For your summer assignment, you will read two novels:

Brave New World by Aldous Huxley

Jane Eyre by Charlotte Bronte

Additionally, you will need *1984* by George Orwell as we will start reading this novel beginning approximately the second week of school.

On or near the first day of school, expect to have an assessment on *Brave New World* and *Jane Eyre*. Although you will not be assessed on annotations, it is still expected that you annotate as you read, marking/highlighting important passages and literary techniques that develop the themes. You may also choose to annotate using sticky notes. Please bring both annotated summer novels on the first day of class.

Part One: *Brave New World*

This is a dystopian novel, so some situations may seem disturbing or bizarre but play a key role in the themes of the novel. As this course features college-level work, literature studied may feature mature subject matter. *Brave New World* is a cautionary tale in which the government promotes drug use and promiscuity; these topics are presented in a negative light to the reader.

When you finish reading *Brave New World*, complete one of the following essays, handwritten in your composition notebook. You will be using this notebook in class, and you may purchase either a composition notebook (black and white speckled type) or a spiral notebook.

Occasionally, I will collect notebooks; so, make sure you have a notebook dedicated just to this class. Your handwritten essay should demonstrate an original, comprehensive, and organized interpretation of the novel and its themes. It should incorporate textual evidence (MLA) from the novel as support for the analysis. A minimum of two pages (one side = one page) in length is a suitable target. Choose **ONE** of the prompts below.

1. Recently a student was frustrated with the seemingly picky fine points of punctuation. He said that it wasn't really important. He went on to say that he felt the world would be a much better place if people didn't have to think very much but could just enjoy life. How would you respond to him using *Brave New World* as support?

2. In the twentieth century, many novels were written warning of the dangers of misusing scientific knowledge or of carrying such knowledge to extremes. In a well-organized essay, discuss how Aldous Huxley's novel could be considered such a cautionary work.

3. Max Frisch (1911-1991) wrote "Technology {gives us} the knack of so arranging the world that we don't have to experience it." In a well-organized essay, defend, challenge, or qualify this assertion about technology. Include evidence from your reading, experience, or observation to support your position.

4. In some novels, the author focuses more on the internal turmoil of a character than on the character's external conflicts in order to explore philosophical questions and develop the novel's themes. Choose one such character who faces internal conflicts and explain how those conflicts serve to develop the novel's themes and ideas.

Part Two: *Jane Eyre*

Jane Eyre, by Charlotte Bronte, is the story of a young woman's coming of age. Bronte structured her novel in such a way that each setting of the novel symbolizes a stage in Jane's maturing into womanhood. Below are a series of prompts for each setting that will help you understand the novel and Jane. Respond to each of these prompts in reflections of one to one and one-half pages each. You will have six reflections. Title your responses according to the sections listed below. Do not think that you need to answer each question within each prompt. Instead, use the questions to guide your thoughts to help you interpret or reflect upon the novel in a different way. These reflections should be typed (Times New Roman 12 point font and double-spaced) with complete sentences and well-developed paragraphs. Supply textual support from the novel using MLA documentation. OWL at Purdue is a valuable website for documentation information. You will submit this assignment through Google Classroom the first day of class.

Reflection Prompts:

Location 1 - Gateshead

Describe as many details as you can recall about Jane's experience in the "red room." Discuss the use of colors, details about furnishings, the looking glass. What frightens Jane? How does Mrs. Reed react? In many ways this scene establishes, as does the opening chapter, motifs which recur in the novel. Consider examples that illustrate the motifs of starvation, flight, supernatural occurrences, imprisonment, and madness.

Location 2 - Lowood

Does Jane's character in Chapter 9 seem different? Has Helen influenced Jane's character? What is the purpose of the characterization of Helen Burns and Miss Temple in Bronte's central task of developing Jane's character.

A Transition

At the beginning of Chapter 10, Jane addresses the reader by commenting that "this is not a regular autobiography." What is the purpose in this change of the narrator's relationship to the reader? How has Jane changed during the eight silent years? When Jane prays for liberty, she concludes, "grant me at least a new servitude." How do you react to that attitude? Is she a typically submissive Victorian woman or a modern assertive woman?

Thornfield

Examine Jane's conversation with Rochester in Chapter 23 very carefully. What is signified by the references to the moth, the birds, the flight? Is Rochester kind or cruel to Jane? What attitude toward the role of women is revealed by his comments about her? Her comments about herself?

Marsh's End

Compare Jane's journey to her preceding journeys. Describe the family who takes her in. What is signified by their names - what mythological, Biblical, and/or literary characters are suggested?

Ferndean

The last chapter begins, "Reader, I married him." What is the tone of the passage? Is the conclusion a satisfactory one considering Jane's character development throughout the novel? Does it reveal that Jane is a traditional woman who wants the traditional role of wife and mother?

The above prompts come from the following source:

Humble, Sally and Thomas Humble. *English Literature and Composition*. Duke University Talent and Identification Program, 1999. Print.

If you have any questions over the summer regarding these assignments, please feel free to send me an email. I try to check my email at least once a week over the summer break.

What to bring for your first AP Lit class period:

1. Your composition or spiral notebook with completed essay over *Brave New World*.
 2. The digital reflection prompts over *Jane Eyre*. All six should be on the same document and ready to submit on the first day of class. Make sure you include an MLA heading.
 3. Supplies for AP Lit and Comp
- In addition to the composition or spiral notebook (journal), bring the following:

- A. Either a one-inch, 3-ring binder or if you keep larger A and B day binders, a dedicated section for this class - you'll need somewhere to keep returned papers and handouts (folder with pockets)
- B. Paper (college or wide) and writing utensils
- C. Both annotated summer novels
- D. George Orwell's *1984* (Have this by the second week of school.)

