

May 25, 2011

Dear

Welcome to AP Literature & Composition! I hope you are proud of your accomplishment. I know that I am looking forward to exploring literature and life with you in September.

Why do we do Summer Reading and writing?

- to keep those brain cells exercised (Use it or lose it.)
- to have works everyone has read in common so we can begin the year with deep conversation
- to increase the number of AP quality works that you will have as a resource for the AP Exam in May.
- just because it is fun and intellectually and personally stimulating.

**Be aware of the following due dates:**

- **Assignment #2** (Irving — **3 Journal Responses & an essay**) due **on or before 20 July 2010**. Upload to Moodle as a **MS Word document or a pdf**. From your Journal Responses write a two **(2) page paper** which solidifies your reading experience for APOM. Focus on a generalization or two about the novel. Upload due on **20 July 2010**

**Check your e-mail for an acknowledgement** from me regarding receipt of document..

- **Assignment #3** (Answers to Reflection Questions on *The Other Wes Moore* & Personal Essay about an influential person) due **on or before 20 August 2011**. Upload to Moodle as a **MS Word document or a pdf if you do not have MS Word. You may also use Google docs or Open Office to create a Word document. I cannot open WPS or Works files.**

**Check your e-mail for an acknowledgement** from me regarding receipt of document.

**If you are on Summer Service trips, attending athletic or educational camps, or traveling, you are responsible to PLAN NOW so that you complete and upload the assignments on time.**

**Failure to complete the Summer Reading and Writing in a timely manner will signal your unreadiness to handle a college level course and you may lose your spot in APE. In that case you will be placed in available electives (those not already filled). This has happened in the past; don't put yourself in that position.**

**If you have any questions, feel free to e-mail me:**

[ichristian@sjprep.org](mailto:ichristian@sjprep.org)

**AP Literature & Composition  
Summer Reading & Writing  
2011**

**REQUIRED :**

*How to Read Literature Like a Professor* (Thomas C. Foster)

\*\*\* See notes below on what to do with this book. \*\*\*

**AND**

*A Prayer for Owen Meany* (John Irving)

**AND**

*The Other Wes Moore* (Wes Moore)

Go to SJPrep **Moodle** site **NOW** and enroll in AP Lit & Comp **2011-2012**

Password is APES2011

**PLEASE SEE NEXT PAGE FOR ASSIGNMENTS AND DUE DATES.**

## 11 Easy Steps for Successful APE Summer Reading

1. Go to SJPrep **Moodle** site **NOW** and enroll in AP Lit & Comp **2011-2012**  
Password is APES2011  
\*\*\*\*\*Please use your **Prep e-mail** address in your sign-up and profile. Be appropriate in your profile.\*\*\*\*\*
2. **Upload spots** will be there for assignments 2 and 3. Please **observe due dates**.
3. There will also be **Discussion Boards** set up to talk to one another (and me) about the books you are reading. This is NOT a requirement, but you might find it helpful and rewarding — personally, intellectually and **extra credit for Quarter 1**.
4. **Purchase your own copies** of Irving. You have a copy of *The Other Wes Moore*  
**Bring them to class with you in September.**
5. **Read Foster book first.** It will really help you digest the two other readings.
6. Take **detailed chapter notes** for Foster. Do NOT type; please **handwrite**) Bring to class with you on **Day 1. THIS IS ASSIGNMENT #1.**  
**\*\*\* If you had Ms. Cook and read HTRLRP AND still have your notes. Re-read the notes adding insights (in a colored pen) from your year of study and Summer Reading. You should recognize the elements Foster discusses in the books you are reading this summer. If you don't have notes, you will have to re-read and create them.**
7. Read *A Prayer for Owen Meany*. **Annotate** (mark up) your copy of the book. Irving is a remarkable writer, a great storyteller. He has a gift for creating quirky, sometimes bizarre characters who we accept as real. There is wonderful humor and deep sadness in this novel, as well as first love and war. Underline imp. Quotes, sentences you like, things you question, etc.
8. Journal responses to Irving book:  
**THIS IS ASSIGNMENT #2. Due on Moodle by 20 July 2011.**
9. **Your third reading, *The Other Wes Moore*, is the book chosen by the English Department.** **Annotate** (mark up) your copy of the book.  
Hand write your responses to the reflection questions supplied by the department .
10. Your **2-3 page essay** about what you have learned from this memoir—about the person and his/her writing style **should come with you on DAY 1 of school.** What new insights do you have about yourself, life, writing as a result of reading
11. Personal Essay about an influential person, situation, event in your life due **on or before 20 August 2011.**  
Two (2) pages. This is a **potential college essay.** I am interested in the person's effect on you. That should be the bulk of the essay with a bit about the person, situation, event.

**THIS IS ASSIGNMENT #3. Due on Moodle by 20 August 2011**

**YOU ARE FINISHED. ENJOY YOUR SUMMER!**

**PLEASE GO TO NEXT PAGE**

### Writing the Voice Inside your Head/The Clearest Voice

In addition to the reading, I ask that you **write**:

• **three journal responses**, as you read, **for A Prayer for Owen Meany** (3 total). One of these should focus on the • **style** of the writing of the book, how the author uses language. In general, these should • **demonstrate your involvement or your engagement with the novel**. I am much more interested in your honest and thoughtful responses to what you're reading than I am with your writing something you think I want to read, but that really doesn't reflect you trying to come to grips with what you're reading. In these responses, you can:

- focus on a character (s) that seem(s) interesting or puzzling,
- focus on any patterns you discover, either related to a character, an idea,
- focus on the writing, or on how these come together.

Whatever you choose, get involved in the details of the novel. These responses should **reflect a close and deep engagement with what you're reading**. Consider about **a page or so** as a length for each of these. Again, don't worry about "answers" in these journal responses. I do, though, want to see your minds at work creating understanding. Understanding is tricky, though. Coming to an understanding often involves asking questions that have multiple answers, involves false starts, and is often elusive. As a teacher and reader, **I am skeptical about readers who seem to have easy, quick, pat answers. Perhaps more simply, just try to capture the "voice inside your head."** (See poem at end of this document.)

In addition, reading and your Journal Entries,

• **bring your reading and understanding to a conclusion in a two/three-page essay**. *Let this come out of your journal responses*. Whereas journal writing focuses on the details of your reading, this should **focus more on a generalization or two about the novel**. These should draw on the journal responses as support for these generalizations. **DO quote from the novel by using parenthetical citations with page numbers** (Irving 29).

**SUMMARY OF READINGS:**

- *How to Read Literature Like a Professor* by Thomas Foster (Notes. Do not skip Chapter 27/Encomium)
- *A Prayer for Owen Meany* by John Irving (There is a movie, *Simon Birch*. Irving felt it bastardized his work and would not allow the film company to use his title (APOM))
- *The Other Wes Moore* by Wes Moore.

**RUBRIC FOR GRADING WRITING:**

**Outstanding Responses (9 and 10 pts.):**

May vary in length but go on long enough to reflect and accommodate extended thought. Responses regularly stretch the writer's understanding or pose thoughtful questions for which the writer may have no ready answer. Responses are willing to speculate and show the writer willing and eager to interact with the text. Responses are provocative, spirited, and lively. Over time responses show a growth in understanding and frequently makes connections between ideas and parts of the text. Writer has a strong sense of her own voice.

**Average Responses (7 and 8 pts.):**

Occasionally lengthy and complex, but other brief to the point of sketchiness. Some responses willing to pose questions, but many do not probe beneath the surface of the text. Entries seem cursory, the result of obligation rather than of interest. Responses sometimes lively and spirited sometimes tired or flat. Overall, these only give inconsistent sense of progress and/or understanding of the process of critical reading.

**Poor Responses (6 and below):**

Responses are irregular, sparse, and fragmentary. Little or no effort to speculate or to reach for more conclusions. Little to no interaction with the text. There is little or no sense of progress in understanding of the process of critical reading. Little or no sense that the writer has thought much beyond the immediate entry.

I am not interested in what *Sparknotes* (or any other “crutch” material) has to say about any of these books. If I were, I’d just read those and skip reading your writing. In addition to personal interest in what you have to think and write, I, of course, have a teacherly responsibility. Should I find evidence of **writing that is not yours, you will receive a zero**, and my suggestion that you transfer from the class. Should you decide to stay in the course, you will be lucky to earn a C for the quarter.

**See poem below!**

## THE VOICE YOU HEAR WHEN YOU READ SILENTLY

is not silent, it is a speaking-  
out-loud voice in your head; it is spoken,  
a voice is saying it  
as you read. It's the writer's words,  
of course, in a literary sense  
his or her "voice" but the sound  
of that voice is the sound of voice.  
Not the sound your friends know  
or the sound of a tape played back  
but your voice  
caught in the dark cathedral  
of your skull, your voice heard  
by an internal ear informed by internal abstracts  
and what you know by feeling,  
having felt. It is your voice  
saying, for example, the word "barn"  
that the writer wrote  
but the "barn" you say  
is a barn you know or knew. The voice  
in your head, speaking as you read,  
never says anything neutrally -- some people  
hated the barn they knew,  
some people love the barn they know  
so you hear the word loaded  
and a sensory constellation  
is lit: horse-gnawed stalls,  
hayloft, black heat tape wrapping  
a water pipe, a slippery  
spilled *chirr* of oats from a split sack,  
the bony, filthy haunches of cows . . .  
And "barn" is only a noun- no verb  
or subject has entered into the sentence yet!  
The voice you hear when you read to yourself  
is the clearest voice: you speak it  
speaking to you.

— Thomas Lux

*The above is the business end of this letter. Personally, I am excited to have this opportunity to work with you. Get good rest, have fun, and stay safe. See you in September!*