
AP LIT SUMMER ASSIGNMENT

This year, we're taking on Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* from roughly the same era--a bit earlier.

A disclaimer: the ideas in this assignment come from a variety of sources. I've compiled and adapted them.

Third, the internet has a boatload (literally) of opinions/papers/blogs/rants about *Frankenstein*. Don't look at it. Really. (Step away from the internet!) Your thinking will be yours, not a rehashing of someone else's opinion. Few people make a living commenting on books, but we all need to learn to think independently and write clearly.

We'll spend first semester considering ways to read and think. As you read *Frankenstein* you'll think about the historical implications of the book, specifically about how the novel reflects both the gothic themes popular at this time and of scientific discoveries. William Godwin, Mary Shelley's father, wrote this about the novel in his pamphlet "Of History and Romance."

Romance [a novel], then, strictly considered, may be pronounced to be one of the species of history. The difference between romance and what ordinarily bears the denomination history, is this. The historian is confined to individual incident and individual man, and must hang upon that his invention or conjecture as he can. The writer collects his materials from all sources, experience, report, and the records of human affairs; then generalises them; and finally selects, from their elements and the various combinations they afford, those instances which he is best qualified to portray, and which he judges most calculated to impress the hear and improve the faculties of his reader. In this point of view we should be apt to pronounce that romance was a bolder species of composition than history.

SO WHAT'S THE ASSIGNMENT? FIRST, SIGN UP FOR EDMODO AP LIT - **ACNDPN**

THE LINKS ARE IN THE FOLDER "SUMMER ASSIGNMENT - FRANKENSTEIN." JOIN NOW! (Request access on Edmodo if you miss the window.)

- 1 Read and take notes on background information. (The links for this information are in the summer assignment folder on Edmodo.) The guiding questions for this part of your reading are in a document in the folder. (Get the hint: there's a folder with more work to do.) The links are divided into science, origin, and gothic literature. Each section has a question to consider.
- 2 Consider the following umbrella question: How does Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* reflect the scientific and cultural context in which the novel was written? How does it communicate the tension of scientific discovery?
- 3 Read *Frankenstein* with this background information and question in mind, noting significant passages that reflect the scientific and cultural interests of the period, including elements of gothic literature. Then create a close reading journal with excerpts from the book and your own analytical comments in response to those excerpts. You might consider organizing your excerpts by topic: e.g., science, gothic features. (But your journal is for you: arrange how you want.) (You can buy the 1831 version or use an online version. I've linked to both.)
- 4 Write a 1 1/2 -2 page typed response to the question listed in #2. **You should focus** the question in some way. In other words, maybe the science interests you most, so you'll write about how the novel reflects the scientific tensions or explorations of the day. **Consider the "so what?"** "So what?" if literature reflects science, for example. The response shows your thinking: it is not a formal essay. Do explicitly reference the novel as you think through the question, though. Your journal can be typed or written in a bound notebook.
- 5 Take a picture of yourself reading *Frankenstein* in some summer location. Upload to google classroom. Code: m6hinw5
- 6 Read a second novel of your own choosing with the following caveats: It doesn't have to be highbrow, but it shouldn't be inane either. Steer clear of YA novels for this assignment: we'll discuss the idea of "literary merit" at the beginning of the year. On Edmodo, I do have links to book recommendations. If you start a book and don't like it or it's not right for you, pick a new book. (Flip the paper for this book response & due dates.)

DUE DATES FOR FRANKENSTEIN:

AUGUST 14 - THE PICTURE UPLOADED TO GOOGLE CLASSROOM.

SEPTEMBER 5 - THE FRANKENSTEIN JOURNAL IN CLASS.

I check my email over the summer, just not every day; email with questions! nancy.smith@rsd.edu

FLASH RESPONSE

In addition to reading *Frankenstein*, you'll also read another **novel (that means fiction)**. My goal is that you read a work of some merit, a classic or a modern work that has been identified as having complexity. There's a folder on Edmodo called "Choice Reading" with links to reading recommendations. And ask around. Lots of students have been reading *All the Light We Cannot See*. If you didn't read *The Road* this year, I'd suggest that. But you can just choose, too.

- ① **Your name.**
- ② An **image** of the book.
- ③ Type the **first and last sentences** of the novel. Which is your favorite? Why? (Just **one sentence** for your reason.)
- ④ Look back at page 167 of your book. In **two sentences**, explain what happens on this page that matters to the whole.
- ⑤ The **word** from the following list that best relates to your novel: arbitrary, wind, late, quandry, vacuum, ordered, spring (some of these words have multiple meanings) In **one sentence**, why did you choose this word?
- ⑥ A **swatch** of one of the following colors that best relates to your novel: gray, yellow, red, green, blue, purple, white, black

I really mean it when I say it's a flash response. Use **no more than one page** for your response. (Notice that I didn't ask you to explain any of the items in detail.) (Sometimes writing less requires more thinking.) Keep in mind that your response might be shared in class as well. (I confess that how your work looks matters to me.)

Submit your response to the google classroom no later than August 14.
AP Literature Summer Assignment - m6hinw5