

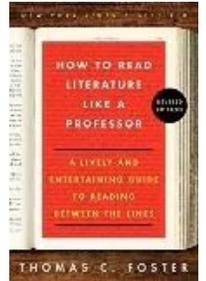
**AMHS**  
**Advanced Placement English Literature and Composition**  
**Summer Reading/Writing Assignments**  
**Summer 2020**

Welcome to AP English Literature! You have several assignments to work on this summer in preparation for our coursework. Read the instructions on this paper carefully. We have chosen these assignments to get you excited about the reading we will do throughout the year and to provide a baseline for the skills you will hone in this class. Be prepared. Enjoy!

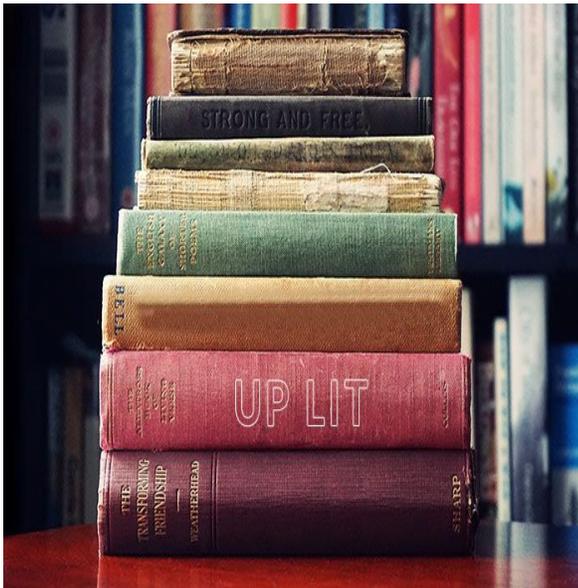
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**Assignment 1: Purchase a book for use during the school year**

Purchase *How to Read Literature Like a Professor: A Lively and Entertaining Guide to Reading Between the Lines* by Thomas C. Foster – **2014 edition**. You may purchase a used copy from Amazon.com, but be sure you purchase the revised, 2014 edition. You may also want to look at Mr. K's Books.



**Assignment 2: Up Lit Novel Assignments**



A relatively new genre has emerged in recent years and never has it seemed more needed -- **Up Lit**. The genre has been defined as:

a new literary genre that centers on the power of kindness, the power of friendship, the power of community, the power of redemption and the power to fix what's broken. Up Lit depicts life-affirming stories of hope, kindness, joy, empathy, humor, compassion and love. With a healthy dose of realism, Up Lit portrays often complex human connections as opportunities to find and deliver hope in spite of any chaos that may be present. In Up Lit, human existence isn't futile; it's something worth recognizing and celebrating.

Source: <https://www.dudleycourtpress.com/what-is-up-lit/>

Your task is to choose one of the novels from our list and annotate as you read. When we return to school, we will discuss the novels to decide if "Up Lit" as a genre is worthy of academic study. Ultimately, you will decide whether or not your novel qualifies as "literature." This assignment means you will need to be thinking about what makes a novel "literature." How do we define the term, what techniques do authors employ that makes something "literature," etc.? You should annotate significant events, quotes, and examples that will help you either defend your novel as "literature" or make your case that it is not "literature."

## Up Lit Novel Selections

*Lincoln in the Bardo* by George Saunders

*Behold the Dreamers* by Imbolo Mbue

*How to Stop Time* by Matt Haig

*Professor Chandra Follows His Bliss* Rajeev Balasubramanyam

*America for Beginners* by Leah Franqui

*The Keeper of Lost Things* by Ruth Hogan

*Small Blessings* by Martha Woodroof

*The Storied Life of A.J. Fikry* by Gabrielle Zevin

**Note: Your main task with this assignment is to annotate and to think about how you define “literature” as you read. You will not turn an essay on the first day of school. Instead, we will complete several assignments to help you defend your position that your novel is or is not literature after we begin the school year.**

### **Question: How will you assess our annotation?**

I will ask you to turn to a random page in the novel. If you don't have a meaningful annotation for that page, I'll ask you to turn to another one. If you don't have meaningful annotation for that page either, you will not receive credit.

### **Question: Okay, so what counts as “meaningful”?**

Meaningful does not mean that you write a paragraph on every page/highlight every word/only put a question mark next to lines you find confusing. Highlighting, putting hearts next to sentences you love, adding “Right on!” when the character finally gets his/her due are fine annotations, but you also need to have a few meaningful annotations for multiple chapters in the book. (sprinkled throughout). .

- Good signs: You have specific words relevant to the author's point, and meaningful responses to the ideas s/he raises. You ask questions and offer possible answers to your questions. You connect to specific elements/events/passages in other parts of the book.
  - Conversation or commentary with an idea on that page
  - Thorough questions about issues raised on that page
  - Meaningful comparisons to relevant, high-quality films or works of literature
- Bad signs: No names, no specifics, generic questions that could apply to anything.
- Bad example: “Why is the author spending so much time describing the meal?”
- Good example: “Why so much description? It’s Just dinner--but maybe metaphor for marriage? throwing it away?”

**Due: first day of school**

### **Uplit Assignment: Significant Words**

Choose ten important words from your book that the reader should pay close attention to and understand while reading. Your choices should come from multiple chapters throughout the novel and be words of special importance in the story. Type your list of words and include chapter and page number where you find them. Define words you do not know. We will use your list of words on the first day of school. Note: you do not need to list the page number for every instance your word appears in the novel. Choose the BEST instance only.

**Due: first day of school**

## Assignment 2: Poetry Collection Analysis

Choose one of the poetry collections below and read and annotate all of the poems in the collection. You will need a physical copy of the book for this assignment (no Ebooks accepted). Each collection is approximately 90 pages, with varying numbers of poems. You should aim to read approximately 5 poems at a time, annotating as you read. Don't save this assignment for the last minute, as you will NOT be able to successfully analyze an entire book of poetry in 2-3 nights.

As you annotate **each** poem, here are some elements that may seem worthy of annotation, but note that not all will apply to every poem in your collection:

- What is the poem about?
- Define unknown words.
- Consider structure – couplets, tercets, prose, other? Also any use of italics.
- Unique or surprising images – what do they convey to you?
- Line breaks – end-stopped vs enjambed lines, caesura, punctuation
- What else? Figurative language, word play, title significance, POV, shift

After reading the collection **in its entirety**, answer the following questions. Each response should be a typed, solid, well-written paragraph. Remember to label your paper with a proper MLA header and proofread your response! And note: you should NOT consult any outside sources or help (including your classmates) to answer any of these questions. This is independent work. You will be required to upload your answers to turnitin.com.

1. What poem did you connect with most and why?
2. Consider the title of your collection. If it is taken from a poem in the collection, what makes the ideal title poem for the collection? If it is not taken from a poem, why is the title a fitting selection for the collection?
3. What makes the final poem in your collection the ideal resolution to this collection?

**Due: First day of school**

### Poetry Collections

**Marcus Amaker, *The Birth of All Things* (Available June 2).** Marcus Amaker was named Charleston, SC's first Poet Laureate in 2016. His poetry was selected to be published alongside two national book award winners in an anthology of African American poetry, and has been featured by PBS Newshour, SC Public Radio, Huffington Post, A&E Network, Charleston Magazine, Charleston City Paper, North Dakota Quarterly, Post and Courier, Charleston Scene and several other publications. In a press release, Amaker describes the book: "*The Birth of All Things* is about creative freedom. These poems take chances — in form and subject matter. This collection is my most personal and professional work, and the reader will come away with a more complete view of who I am after experiencing the book."

### **Jerico Brown, *The Tradition* - Winner of the Pulitzer Prize**

"Beauty abounds in Jericho Brown's daring new poetry collection, despite and inside of the evil that pollutes the everyday. *The Tradition* questions why and how we've become accustomed to terror: in the bedroom, the classroom, the workplace, and the movie theater. From mass shootings to rape to the murder of unarmed people by police, Brown interrupts complacency by locating each emergency in the garden of the body, where living things grow and wither—or survive. In the urgency born of real danger, Brown's work is at its most innovative. His invention of the duplex—a combination of the sonnet, the ghazal, and the

blues—is an all-out exhibition of formal skill, and his lyrics move through elegy and memory with a breathless cadence. Jericho Brown is a poet of eros: here he wields this power as never before, touching the very heart of our cultural crisis."

### ***Life on Mars* By Tracy K. Smith**

"With allusions to David Bowie and interplanetary travel, *Life on Mars* imagines a soundtrack for the universe to accompany the discoveries, failures, and oddities of human existence. In these brilliant new poems, Tracy K. Smith imagines a sci-fi future sucked clean of any real dangers, contemplates the dark matter that keeps people both close and distant, and revisits the kitschy concepts like "love" and "illness" now relegated to the Museum of Obsolescence. These reveal the realities of life lived here, on the ground, where a daughter is imprisoned in the basement by her own father, where celebrities and pop stars walk among us, and where the poet herself loses her father, one of the engineers who worked on the Hubble Telescope. With this remarkable third collection, Smith establishes herself as among the best poets of her generation."

### ***The Beauty* by Jane Hirshfield**

"An incandescent collection from one of American poetry's most distinctive and essential voices. *The Beauty* opens with a series of dappled, ranging "My" poems--"My Skeleton," "My Corkboard," "My Species," "My Weather"--in which Hirshfield uses materials both familiar and unexpected to explore the magnitude, singularity, and permeability of our shared existence. Of her memory, she writes, "Like the small soaps and shampoos / a traveler brings home / then won't use, / you, memory, / almost weightless / this morning inside me." With a pen faithful to the actual yet dipped at times in the ink of the surreal, Hirshfield cuts, as always, directly to the heart of human experience. Her robust affirmation of choice even amid inevitability and her contemplation of our moral, societal, and biological intertwinings sustain poems that tune and retune the keys of a life. For Hirshfield, "Zero Plus Anything Is a World." Her recipes for that world ("add salt to hunger," "add time to trees") offer an altered understanding of our lives' losses and additions, and of the small and larger beauties we so often miss."

### ***In You and Yours*, Naomi Shihab Nye**

"*In You and Yours*, Naomi Shihab Nye continues her conversation with ordinary people whose lives become, through her empathetic use of poetic language, extraordinary. Nye writes of local life in her inner-city Texas neighborhood, about rural schools and urban communities she's visited in this country, as well as the daily rituals of Jews and Palestinians who live in the war-torn Middle East. Balancing direct language with a suggestive "aslantness," Nye probes the fragile connection between language and meaning. She never shies from the challenge of trying to name the mysterious logic of childhood or speak truth to power in the face of the horrors of war. She understands our lives are marked by tragedy, inequity, and misunderstanding, and that our best chance of surviving our losses and shortcomings is to maintain a heightened awareness of the sacred in all things."

### ***The Trouble with Poetry And Other Poems* by Billy Collins**

"Collins's poems are filled with mischief, humor, and irony....Through simple language, Collins shows that good poetry doesn't have to be obscure or incomprehensible. Gorgeous, funny, and deeply empathetic, Billy Collins's poetry is a window through which we see our lives as if for the first time."

***Citizen Illegal* by José Olivarez**

"...poet José Olivarez explores the stories, contradictions, joys, and sorrows that embody life in the spaces between Mexico and America. He paints vivid portraits of good kids, bad kids, families clinging to hope, life after the steel mills, gentrifying barrios, and everything in between. Combining wry humor with potent emotional force, Olivarez takes on complex issues of race, ethnicity, gender, class, and immigration using an everyday language that invites the reader in."

***Counting Descent* by Clint Smith**

"Clint Smith's debut poetry collection is a coming of age story that seeks to complicate our conception of lineage and tradition...His poems move fluidly across personal and political histories, all the while reflecting on the social construction of our lived experiences. Smith brings the reader on a powerful journey forcing us to reflect on all that we learn growing up, and all that we seek to unlearn moving forward."

**Due Dates****On the first day of class, bring the following:**

- Annotated poetry collection
- Poetry Collection Answers (typed)
- Your annotated Up Lit novel (ebooks are fine)
- Up Lit novel Significant Words
- How to Read Literature Like a Professor*
- Prepare for quiz on Up Lit novels on the first day of class