

**AP Literature and Composition**  
**Summer Reading 2021-2022**

**Novels: SELECT ONE**

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, *Americanah*

**OR**

Viet Thanh Nguyen, *The Sympathizer*

**Writing Assignment:**

You will be submitting a reflective and analytical journal for the novel you select. Journals must craft an interpretation of the novel using specific details from the text and reflecting on the theme (*meaning of the work as a whole*).

- Journals should not be stream-of-conscious writing; evidence of planning and organization in order to craft a cogent interpretation of the text is important (each paragraph should build upon an overarching interpretation of the novel; a thesis is needed to ground your analysis).
- Consider ideas *as well as* literary elements (characterization, language, writing style, narrative structure, figurative language, imagery, etc.).
- References should be made to specific events and characters in the text; text references (evidence) must be followed by commentary (analysis).
- If you include quoted material, it should be brief (no more than one sentence, cited using MLA format).
- Begin all literary analysis with a TAG statement (title, author, genre) in the introduction.
- Journals should be three-to-four typed pages, with FOUR pages being the maximum and must be double-spaced, 12 point font).

The journal assignment is intended to be flexible, not rigid. Take the opportunity to be thoughtful and reflective. Develop a personal relationship with the text. Demonstrate your passion for literature. Have fun with your analysis.

**Journals are worth 50 points.**

- Effort and thoughtfulness will be the primary criteria on which you are evaluated.
- Journals that are primarily a summary of the text, without significant reflection or analysis, are likely to pull a low score for this assignment.
- Of course, this is an AP class so grammar and mechanics will affect your grade (proofread carefully).

Your journals will be useful during a discussion of the novels in September. Those discussions will lead to a formal essay. If you are concerned about HOW to interpret your novel, read the non-fiction text (*How to Read Literature Like a Professor*) first.

**Nonfiction: (required)**

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

Journal: Write a brief (1-2 page) reaction to a specific idea (chapter) about literary analysis. Select an idea from Foster that is unfamiliar to you. ***Be sure to insert a page break between the novel and the non-fiction texts to keep your ideas clear.***

**Foster Chapter Requirements (you should read ALL of these and select one to write about):**

- Chapter 1: “Every Trip is a Quest (Except When It’s Not)”
- Chapter 2: “Nice to Eat with You: Acts of Communion”
- Chapter 3: “Nice to Eat You: Acts of Vampires”
- Chapter 4: “Now, Where Have I Seen Her Before?”
- Chapter 5: “When in Doubt, It’s from Shakespeare...”
- Chapter 6: “...Or the Bible”
- Chapter 9: “It’s More Than Just Rain or Snow”
- Chapter 10: “Never Stand Next to the Hero”
- Chapter 12: “Is That a Symbol?”
- Chapter 13: “It’s All Political”
- Chapter 14: “Yes, She’s a Christ Figure, Too”
- Chapter 15: “Flights of Fancy”
- Chapter 18: “If She Comes Up, It’s Baptism”
- Chapter 19: “Geography Matters”
- Chapter 20: “So Does Season”
- Chapter 21: “Marked for Greatness”
- Chapter 22: “He’s Blind for a Reason, You Know”
- Chapter 23: “It’s Never Just Heart Disease ... And Rarely Just Illness”
- Chapter 24: “Don’t Read with Your Eyes”
- Chapter 25: “It’s My Symbol and I’ll Cry if I Want To”

**Journal Grading Criteria: Total submission (in one document) is 5-6 pages maximum (insert page breaks between each text).**

<b>Exemplary (45-50 points)</b>	Focuses on the importance of specific details from the selected work to build an interpretation. Organizes and supports an argument as a line of reasoning, each with adequate evidence that is clearly explained. Literary elements are addressed and analyzed.
<b>Proficient (40-44 points)</b>	Focuses on the importance of specific details from the selected work to build an interpretation. Organizes and supports an interpretation as a line of reasoning, evidence is clear and present but may be inconsistently explain or supported. Evidence of literary elements are present throughout the analysis.
<b>Developing (39-35 points)</b>	May contain some simplistic, inaccurate, or repetitive explanations that don’t strengthen the argument. May make one point well, but either does not make multiple supporting claims or does not adequately support more than one claim. A line of reasoning is not clearly established. Literary elements may be superficially addressed.
<b>Beginning (34 or below)</b>	Provides evidence that is mostly general. Summarizes the evidence but does not explain how the evidence supports the argument. Tends to focus on overarching narrative developments or description of a selected work rather than specific details. Literary elements missing or superficially addressed.

**\*\* Please note: a pattern of grammar errors may lower the score of an otherwise effective paper. \*\***