

**Summer Reading 2008**  
**English II Pre-AP and LEAP**  
**Marcus High School**

Congratulations on enrolling in English II Pre-AP or LEAP! This course is designed for advanced students who plan to continue in the AP program and / or take the AP Language and Literature tests. Therefore, the rigorous expectations require students to maintain the utmost diligence when learning writing and reading skills this year. This course encompasses World Literature along with preparation for the style of the Advanced Placement Exams.

By choosing to take this course, you are indicating that you are a student who enjoys reading and that you have the quality writing skills necessary for excelling at an advanced level.

Your first assignment is to read two novels this summer. You will be assessed on your summer reading during the first week of class; the assessments will count as one major test grade. You are highly encouraged to take notes and / or to annotate the novels as you read. We will have a brief class discussion and a group review activity prior to the assessments, so be sure to bring a copy of each text and all of your notes / annotations with you to the first day of class.

- **You must read *The Once and Future King*** by T.H. White.  
You will have an objective test over this novel to assess your reading comprehension.
  
- **In addition, you must select ONE of the following novels to read:**
  - ❖ *Dandelion Wine* by Ray Bradbury
  - ❖ *The Joy Luck Club* by Amy Tan
  - ❖ *The Jungle* by Upton Sinclair
  - ❖ *My Ántonia* by Willa Cather
  - ❖ *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen

You will have an essay test over your chosen novel to assess your reading comprehension, analysis skills, and writing skills. Attached are some tips for successfully composing in-class essays.

**\*\*Please note:** If you are scheduled to take English II Pre-AP or LEAP in January 2009, you should either re-read your novels or carefully review all of your notes and annotations prior to the first day of class.\*\*

If you have any questions about the summer reading, please contact one of us for help:

Ms. Groce            [grocem@lisd.net](mailto:grocem@lisd.net)

Ms. Johnson        [johnsonlj@lisd.net](mailto:johnsonlj@lisd.net)

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Enjoy your reading! We look forward to seeing you during the 2008-2009 school year!

English II Pre-AP and LEAP Teachers

## Timed Writing Tips

- ❖ The following are recommended guidelines for you to follow when completing a timed writing:
  - Take a few minutes to plan your essay. Write an outline, a mind map, a list of ideas and strategies – whatever it takes to get you organized.
  - Follow the directions exactly. Respond to the prompt as written; do not give a personal spin to it unless this spin is obviously relevant.
  - Do not spend a lot of time on the introduction. A few sentences that focus the reader will suffice. Write a thesis that argues a point, takes a stand on the issue, and addresses each task set by the prompt. Your introduction should not simply rephrase the question you are answering or the topic to which you are responding.
  - Spend most of your time on the body of the essay. Be sure that each paragraph has a unifying topic sentence. Support your points with specific evidence from the text. If you are writing an open-book essay, use direct quotations. Integrate or embed the quotations smoothly; do not just plop them on the page in haste. Try to give the reader some context for the citation before you quote it.
  - The conclusion should provide a sense of closure to the essay, but it certainly should not simply repeat the content of the introduction. Indeed, one good original sentence that truly completes the essay is far more desirable than a dull recap of your major ideas.
  
- ❖ Developing your thesis:
  - Look to the prompt for guidance in developing your thesis; in fact, understanding the prompt itself is essential before you even begin to plan any sort of response.
  - Thesis development should be a three-part process:
    - define/identify the task set by the prompt
    - consider what needs to be addressed in the response
    - decide how best to respond
  - The successful thesis in an AP essay will simultaneously identify the above details while grasping the complexities of the prompt. The successful thesis will synthesize the relationship between specific details and abstract ideas.
  
- ❖ Creating paragraphs:
  - Sentences and paragraphs must flow from one to another without major gaps or shifts; this can be achieved when you learn to strengthen ties between old information and new (your ideas must be clearly linked).
  - Use topic sentences early in the paragraph (typically the first sentence).
  - All details, facts, and examples presented in that paragraph should tie into the topic sentence.
  - Repeating key words, using parallel structure, maintaining consistency, and providing transitions are all skills that you can practice to enhance your paragraphs.
  
- ❖ Transition sentences:
  - You can use a three-step process to ensure you have created effective transition sentences:
    - refer subtly to the idea discussed in the previous paragraph
    - refer briefly to the overall thesis idea
    - refer more specifically to any new ideas to be discussed in the next paragraph
  
- ❖ Composing a Conclusion:
  - Echo the main idea of the essay; do not merely repeat it.
  - Summarize the essay's most salient points, pose a question for further study, offer advice, or propose a course of action.
  - Try to interestingly wrap up the ideas that are introduced in the beginning and then are developed throughout the essay.
  - Having a well-planned essay with a specific purpose will ensure that you can create an effective conclusion – take the time to plan before writing!