

AP ENGLISH LITERATURE SUMMER READING

1. Read the novel, *Moby Dick*, by Herman Melville, **unabridged** (complete) version.
2. Follow the suggested five-week reading program attached, including the journal-keeping assignments.
3. You will be expected to turn in your completed journals (5 full pages *minimum*). The entries will be evaluated according to their quality of response. It is best to read the novel over a few weeks, so do not wait to read in a hurry at the end of summer!
4. Expect to write an additional essay or take an objective test over the novel the first week of class.

Read one of the following plays.

George S. Kauffman and Moss Hart, *You Can't Take it With You*

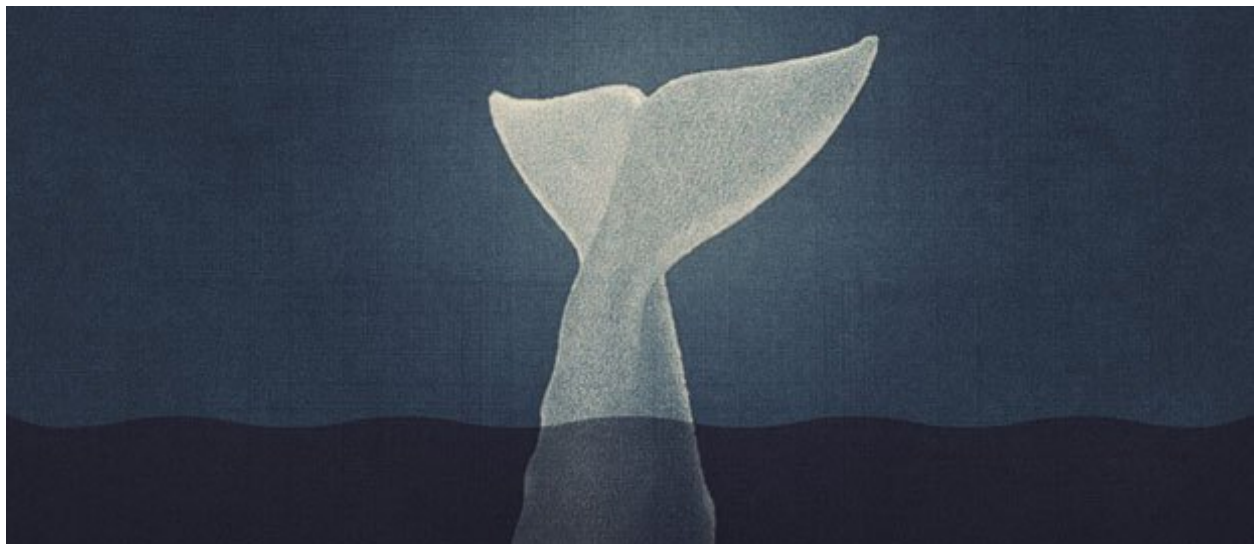
Henrik Ibsen, *A Doll's House*

Thornton Wilder, *Our Town*

Tennessee Williams, *The Glass Menagerie*

In a well-developed essay, minimum of two double-spaced pages, discuss what you consider to be the most important idea in the play and whether you think the idea has value and relevance for people in the world today. Be sure to use specific quotes and details from the text of the play in your essay. Be sure to have a thesis which you state in the first paragraph.

Moby Dick or *The Whale*: Reader Journal



Moby Dick by Herman Melville is considered one of the great classics of American literature. It is not an easy book but can reward the alert reader who is willing to take on the challenge. You are to read this book at your own pace during the summer, **completing it by the first class session**. A suggested five-week schedule is given for you, but you may modify this according to your summer plans. The most important point is DO NOT PROCRASTINATE. Reading this book at the last minute is nearly impossible and not as productive as thinking about it as you move through at a steady pace.

Keep a Reading Journal for Five Weeks in which you write a response for each major segment of the text. Include the date you read and pages covered. A few sentences or a paragraph response is adequate.

A unifying factor for our reading in a Christian school is to look at the **theological implications** of this novel, and there are many of them. Think about what you read from a **Christian perspective**. For example, the narrator of the story, Ishmael, speaks of being a Christian. His name, however, is that of a biblical character, a son of Abraham. Ishmael from the Bible became the Father of the Arab Nations, whose descendants are historically of the Islamic religion. When he first encounters Queequeg, a “pagan” native of a South Sea island, Ishmael is afraid, but later comes to accept Queequeg’s paganism as just as valid as his own beliefs. Is Ishmael too tolerant here, in light of Jesus’ statement that he, Jesus, is the only “way, truth and life”? What about the Quakers who own the whaling ship, *Pequod*? They are very “devout” and at first refuse to even consider Queequeg as a member of their crew because he is not a professing Christian. Yet when Queequeg demonstrates his skill as a harpooner the pious Quakers immediately change their minds and hire him at a high pay rate. What do you think Melville is saying about the Quaker’s piety and sincerity? What do you make of Father Mapple’s sermon on Jonah at the Whaleman’s Chapel? Is it a good sermon and does it convey truth? Is there a character in the novel who stands for the orthodox Christian world view, who sees the whale as merely a part of God’s creation, and not as a representation of evil, as does Captain Ahab? And who was Ahab in the Bible or what kind of a leader was he? Can a man be blamed for the name he is given at birth? First Mate Starbuck wants to stand up to his Captain and stop Ahab in his quest for vengeance, yet does not do so. Is it ever right to mutiny or rebel against the authority over us (see Romans 13 on this issue)? Is “vengeance” the right of an injured person? (some additional suggested scripture references which may prove useful: Genesis 1:21, Job. 3:8. Psalm 74, Isaiah 27:1-2 and Psalm 104:26.)

The following suggestions are borrowed from a Christian website, “The Reading Mother”
<http://thereadingmother.net/2015/06/24/read-moby-dick-why-and-how/>

FIVE-WEEK SCHEDULE FOR MOBY-DICK:

Assignment 1

Begin reading Moby-Dick by Herman Melville this week. Read Etymology, Extracts, and Chapters 1-4. Enjoy the beauty of Melville's descriptive genius!

Assignment 2

Read Moby-Dick, Herman Melville, Chapters 5-42. In your Reading Journal:

Note what you learn about the character of Ahab.

Note what you learn about the attributes of Moby-Dick.

Read Chapter 41-42 at least twice. Write down the attributes of the whale.

Assignment 3

Read Moby-Dick, Herman Melville, Chapters 42-81. In your Reading Journal:

Make additional notes on the character of Ahab

Make additional notes about the attributes of Moby-Dick

Make notes on the character of Starbuck

Copy the quotation from Ahab in Chapter 36 which begins: "Aye, aye, I'll chase him round Good Hope . . ."

Assignment 4

Read Moby-Dick, Herman Melville, Chapters 82-130. In your Reading Journal:

Make additional notes on the character of Ahab

Make additional notes about the attributes of Moby-Dick

Make additional notes on the character of Starbuck

Assignment 5

Finish Moby-Dick, Herman Melville, Chapters 130-135 and the Epilogue. Do this early in the week, and leave much time for the final review:

Sample entry with some suggested thoughts:

“Extracts” pages ____ to ____ June 5, 2017

Question: Why does Melville include all of these notations about whaling in the front of the book?

Maybe he wants to prove that whaling is something universal, that it has gone on for all of history and in all parts of the world. That makes it an important topic.

Perhaps Melville is wanting to make the book seem more realistic by citing these quotes, so that his reader will be willing to accept what happens in the story.

We need to become “experts” in our knowledge of whaling so we can better understand and appreciate the action of the book.

By quoting the Bible about whales Melville may be establishing his knowledge of scripture or may be demonstrating that the Bible is a reliable historical text like the others he quotes.

An estimated minimum number of pages from the journal would be 5 to 10 full pages. Be sure to write in complete sentences and be prepared to share your ideas with the class. You may do a hand-written journal or type in Evernote/Notability.

Questions in the summer? Don't hesitate to contact me at ddhead@scacrusaders.com and I will get back with you quickly. I look forward to hearing about all you learn this summer!