

## English IV Honors Summer Reading

***English IV Honors summer reading selections were chosen to help you sharpen your critical reading skills and to introduce you to important themes in the British literature course.***

Familiarizing yourself with basic background information about an author and their works can contribute to your literary analysis and help elucidate important themes. Before reading each selection, look for the following information. It may be in the supplementary materials in your book or you may need to look it up online.

- ✍ When and where did the author live?
- ✍ What was the original publication date or performance date, not the date of the current edition, of the work?
- ✍ What is the historical context of the work and/or the author's motivation? In other words, what events or other works might have influenced the writing of the work?
  - For example, Kate Chopin wrote *The Awakening* at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century during the beginning of the women's rights movement. She was raised primarily by women who encouraged her learning, but when she married and moved to New Orleans, she experienced a very Catholic, conservative society in a state where women were the legal property of their husbands and divorce was unheard of. Women were expected to conform to the stereotype: they were delicate and passive and should be focused on caring for their families. Chopin's novel questioned these values.

As you read, mark in your text (or elsewhere) significant quotations that pertain to the following information. (Be sure to note page numbers so that you can find the information again when you do your project.)

- ✍ How does place and/or time affect the narrative?
- ✍ What is the point of view of the novel and short stories? For the play, which characters seem to be the main focus? How does the POV affect your interpretation of the work?
- ✍ Do you notice any recurring literary devices (symbols, metaphors, irony, allusions, etc.)?
- ✍ What themes are developed in the work? Lookout for the big ideas we will address in class, though it's unlikely that all will be addressed in each work.
  - How does isolation, physical or mental, affect an individual?
  - What happens when reality doesn't match a person's expectations?
  - Are individuals inherently good or evil?
  - How do societal roles (gender, race, socio-economic class, etc.) affect individuals?
  - How does power (political power, power through technology/science, physical power, magical power, etc.) affect those who have it and those who do not?
  - What happens when society's system of morality/ethics does not respect what we consider to be the inalienable rights of human beings?

This information will be needed when you do your summer reading project; however, I will not be picking up your notes, so don't worry about the exact formatting. Trust in your own ability to read and understand the works. You will have the opportunity to talk to classmates and ask questions once school begins, but I also encourage you to talk to friends in the class over the summer as you are reading. Feel free to message me over the summer if you have any questions about the class, and above all, enjoy your reading!