

Parkland High School

Summer Reading Assignments: 12th Grade AP English

Background and Expectations:

You have registered for 12th grade Advanced Placement English. This is a demanding and challenging college level course designed to help students prepare to complete the requirements for the AP English Literature and Composition Curriculum and to complete the AP English Literature and Composition Examination with a score of “3” or above. The literature studied will include works of fiction, poetry and drama from classical and contemporary world authors. The College Board Advanced Placement Program English Committee “agrees with David Thoreau that it is wisest to read the best books first.” To best direct you for a course of study that challenges you at an AP level, the Committee believes that reading in an AP Level Course “should be both wide and deep... should include the in-depth reading of texts drawn from multiple genre, periods, and cultures.” We invite you to begin your experience by fulfilling the summer reading requirement for the course. The assignment will allow you to read and to experience a novel written by James Joyce, considered by many to be the father of Modernism, and to practice your reading, criticism and writing skills before the actual class begins in September. When school begins in September, we will be able to commence with our coursework.

Summer Reading Objectives:

1. Students will read *A Portrait of an Artist as a Young Man* by James Joyce. They may sign out copies of the novel from the PHS library; however, students are strongly encouraged to purchase their own copies so that they may annotate and take notes in the text.
2. Students will keep a reading journal/log while reading the novel. Entries should be placed in a folder containing typed pages from a Word document. Each journal entry should be dated, and a total of **fifteen** entries should be made during your reading of *A Portrait of an Artist as a Young Man*.
3. Journal Entries will follow a chosen path of exploration and will follow prompts selected and agreed upon by the AP English teachers. Entries will include examinations of textual fragments of the novel, student responses and reactions to the text, and insights into the reading of the novel framed by thematic and structural connections.
4. Students will use appropriate MLA in-text citation form (author’s last name and page number) when citing from a page in the novel.
5. Students will take an objective examination on the novel during the first week of school.
6. Students are expected to spend about eight hours on this assignment.

Journals:

Part I

1. Stephen's father Simon Dedalus, Simon's friend John Casey the ex-Fenian, and the family governess Dante Riordan, a devout supporter of the priests who disowned Charles Parnell over his adultery with Kitty O'Shea, get into an argument over religion and politics during a Christmas dinner. What are their respective positions, and what effect does the arguing have on young Stephen?
2. Aside from learning a bit of Latin and such, Stephen undergoes an intense brand of "socialization" at Clongowes. Discuss one or two of his experiences with adults and/or his fellow students—is the future artist Stephen like other kids, or is there something special about his thoughts and sensibilities (his way of feeling, hearing, seeing, interpreting what others say, etc.)?
3. Stephen's first experiences with the opposite sex deserve some attention. How does he relate to his playmate, Eileen Vance, and what associations does he make between her and the liturgical phrases "Tower of Ivory" and "House of Gold"?

Part II

4. How does Stephen respond to the political talk of his uncle Charles and others and to his natural environment? What begins to separate him from ordinary children as the chapter wears on, so that, as the narrator says, "he was different from others"?
5. What accounts for the alienation Stephen feels towards his father? Joyce's novels and stories often dwell upon the difficulties in cultural and generational continuity: how do Stephen's thoughts about his father Simon reflect on those difficulties?

Part III

6. Much of this chapter is taken up with excruciatingly detailed fire-and-brimstone sermons about the perils of sin and the physical and spiritual torments of the damned. What effect do the sermons have on Stephen as he listens to them? In what sense is his response purely conventional?
7. From 147-158, the narrative describes Stephen's thoughts and actions after the sermons have ended, culminating in his confession of sins to a priest. What is the psychological effect of the confession?

Part IV

8. From 159-66, Stephen is in a state of otherworldly ecstasy following his absolution from sin in the previous section, but from 166-173, he listens to the Belvedere school Director's advice about possible entry into the priesthood. How does the Director describe the benefits of

becoming a Jesuit priest? And why, on 174-75, does Stephen decide very promptly that the priesthood is not for him?

9. From 176-82, how does Stephen view his family and friends after making his fateful decision to reject the path of priesthood? How does he now see the difference between them and himself?

10. From 183-87, Stephen muses on the course he must now pursue. What new significance does his name, "Dedalus," now take on for him, and why?

11. From 185-87, Stephen undergoes an epiphany of sorts. Characterize this important moment of revelation--what does Stephen see? What does he deduce about his own powers, and about the world around him, from this vision?

Part V (188-276)

12. From 221-33, Stephen offers his friend Lynch a budding theory of aesthetics. What are some of the main issues with which Stephen is concerned, and how does he propose to deal with them? (Consider what he says about sublime art and kinetic art; and his treatment of lyric, epic, and dramatic forms. Which of the three does he consider best, and why?)

13. From 258-69, Stephen converses with his friend Cranly. What advice does he offer Stephen? How does this friend assist Stephen as he moves forward and takes the first steps towards independence and life as an artist--that is, what insights does Stephen achieve because of his interaction with Cranly?

14. In his final journal entry, Stephen writes that he will "forge in the smithy of my soul the uncreated conscience of my race." To what extent might we see Stephen's life up to this point as an embodiment of Modernist claims about the relationship between an artist and his work, and between that work and the artist's society and historical epoch?

15. Do you embrace, reject, or qualify Joyce's aesthetic theory? Do you know anyone living the "life of an artist"?

Page numbers from Edition: *Joyce, James. A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man.* New York: Penguin, 2003. ISBN 0142437344.

English Language Arts Reading Journal Evaluation Form

Student Name: _____

Title of Work Read: _____

“Tis the good reader that makes the good book.”

Ralph Waldo Emerson

Your points are based on the following criteria:

Excellent-5

Entries are scholarly, and show breadth and depth of understanding.

Good-4

Entries show solid content and the responses are thoughtful and direct.

Adequate-3

Entries meet the length, requirement, but lacks specificity.

Below Average-2

Entries lack focus and do not specifically address the prompts.

Incomplete-1

Entries are not complete and lack focus.

Summer Scoring Process

The combined journal and test score will comprise no less than 1/5 of the first marking period grade.