

English II Summer Reading Conflict Chart Instructions

Explanation of Purpose

Students are often asked to read a text actively and then write about it. For many students these tasks sometimes seem pointless and overwhelming; however, once students understand the inner workings of a text and the meaning behind them, the task becomes manageable. The theme of a text is a statement of the author's perspective on a universal, real-life issue or experience. Uncovering this theme is much like completing a puzzle: once all the pieces are aligned properly, the overall picture is clear. We use these same pieces of a literary text to compose a literary analysis. We will explore this puzzle metaphor and how it applies to writing this year: this assignment asks you to explore three of the pieces of the literary puzzle (characterization, conflict, and motif) to determine the possible overall idea of the text.

Directions

Complete the attached chart in order to determine a possible theme of one of the texts listed on the back of this page. The chart will be used as prewriting for a literary analysis at the start of the school year. **Honors students are required to read and complete TWO separate charts for TWO of the texts on the list.**

Before Reading

- Review the elements of literature below, which you will text-mark as you actively read.
- Characterization
 - How an author creates and develops a character either directly or indirectly.
 - Example: Romeo is a lust-driven wild man
- Conflict
 - A struggle between two opposing forces in the following ways:
 - Character vs. Character
 - Character vs. Society
 - Character vs. Self
 - Character vs. Nature or God
 - Example (Character vs. Self): Romeo's lust for Roslyn causes him great depression because she will not return his affections.
- Motif
 - Recurring words, phrases, events, or objects that help develop the text's major themes.
 - Example: *Romeo and Juliet* contains constant reference to the words "light" and "dark" or light and dark objects. Benvolio tries to cure Romeo's lust for Roslyn by describing her with objects that suggest dark and evil.

During Reading

- Focusing on the main character(s), text-mark (with annotations) your summer reading book as you identify the three literary elements listed above.
 - Underline the literary elements as they appear
 - Annotate (with a phrase or one word explanation) by answering the questions listed under each literary element in the attached chart. But do not complete the chart yet: your final answers/explanations may change after you finish the book.

After Reading

- Now that you have finished reading the book, use your text-marking and annotations to complete the attached chart.
- Finally, use the evidence from the chart to complete the theme statement below the chart.

Selected Texts

Clearview Regional High School District develops its curriculum in order to best serve the district's mission and meet the subject-area benchmarks established by NCLB and other local, state and national criteria for curriculum development. We recognize that adolescence through young-adulthood is a time when students of the same age are at different maturity levels, so the selection of materials is undertaken with care and deliberation. The English Department selects literary texts that reflect a diversity of perspectives, are age-appropriate, are high quality literature and are useful to fulfill the district's mission and the course's benchmarks. Parents are encouraged to investigate the texts explored by their children; we urge parents to take an active role in helping our students to develop admiration for the elegance and richness of human expression.

Recognizing that not all works are appropriate for all students, texts identified with an (*) contain mature or sensitive language or issues; parents or guardians may wish to preview texts prior to student participation.

The Alchemist by Paulo Coelho

**Climbing the Stairs* by Padma Venkatraman

**Dark Dude* by Oscar Hijuelos

**The Last Summer of the Death Warriors* by Francisco Stork

**Mexican White Boy* by Matt de la Pena

**Persepolis* by Marjane Satrapi

**We Were Here* by Matt de la Pena

See the attached list for more details on each text.

English II Teachers Contact Information

If you have questions about this assignment, please contact one of the teachers listed below.

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