

**Hello, Class of 2018**

**Advanced Placement Literature and Composition Student!**

With numerous literary works ahead of us as we prepare for your Advanced Placement Literature and Composition exam next spring, it is imperative that we begin our first novel before your Senior year commences in August. For summer reading (hopefully sometime in July or early August) please plan to read **One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest** by Ken Kesey.

We will begin discussing, reacting, and assessing your knowledge and understanding of this novel **the week of August 28—that is when your written work will be due and when you will be tested.** This is one occasion when you definitely want to clearly read the assignment before you read the novel. As you read use a self-created labeled Stickee/Post-It Note color scheme system to annotate your book; or, simply take labeled categorized notes (including page numbers) which will help you analyze the novel. Please do not write or highlight in this new book. AND... DO NOT use SparkNotes or other such resources. YOU NEED to READ and ANALYZE the work. What are you noting?

1. Information you will need to respond to the assignments below
2. Questions you have regarding the text
3. Unknown words, key words, and definitions
4. I will be looking for/assessing points specifically on these **five categories:**
  - a. characterization
  - b. themes/motifs
  - c. symbols
  - d. tone (author's attitude)
  - e. imagery

As you read *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, Think in terms of the topics listed below and then Utilize your reading notes/annotations to Prepare a typed response (sentences & paragraphs, please) responding to your reading:

Everyone will do the following short answer analysis/discussion items: (4-5 sentences minimum each with specific text support).

1. Discuss the techniques Kesey uses to present The Ward as a microcosm of the Combine, and describe how the Combine is repressive of individuality and freedom. Be sure to include the use and effect of mechanical language and imagery.
2. Analyze the narrator's **fantastic hallucinatory imagery** and how it contributes to the work as a whole. (Hint: think in terms of the silence/invisibility/fog.)
3. Discuss the use and effectiveness of **a narrator with questionable sanity and hearing.** Chief Bromden, "It's the truth even if it didn't happen."(8) Text support reference (Note example of text support format.)

4. Analyze **McMurphy** as a **contemporary tragic figure**. With the **characteristics below in mind**, is **McMurphy** a **contemporary tragic figure**?

Aristotle delineated a tragic hero as the following:

- **\*\*\*** Someone of royal or noble birth.
  - **\*\*\***The hero's downfall is the result of his own free will not an accident or a twist of fate.
  - **\*\*\***The audience must feel pity for the hero at his downfall because the hero's downfall is not wholly deserved.
  - **\*\*\***The tragic hero must die as the result of his flaw, but his fall results in increased self-knowledge.
  - **\*\*\***The hero's suffering must never be senseless; it must have meaning and purpose.
  - **Note:** in the Modernist era, the tragic hero no longer needs to come from a royal or high position; he can be an average person; he does not need to die as a result of his flaws—simply suffer enough to produce meaning and purpose (lessons learned).
5. Analyze **Nurse Ratched** as a powerful, female, castrating character. Does she intentionally bully the males in the novel or is she legitimately trying to improve their ability to function in a “regular sane society?” What are the redemptive and repressive powers of sexuality in play on the ward?

***Finally, (Last paragraph of your typed response)***

What is your **critical response** to this novel? What makes this a work of critical acclaim? How does Kesey's work compare to that of other novelists you have read?

These are time-consuming but doable assignments; do not let your procrastination make this an insurmountable task. **“Borrowing,” “Copy/Pasting,” etc. the work of others is not an option.** Your written work is a reflection of what YOU experience as you read the novel. Anything else will be considered **Cheating** and is unacceptable. Like Cheating, Late or Incomplete Work is NOT an acceptable outcome in this AP course.

I am eager to begin a new journey with the most outstanding English students in the Class of 2018. Please feel free to email me with questions. Enjoy your summer as you **read and write about One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest.**

All the best,

*Mrs. Bell*

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***Next: The Kite Runner or A Thousand Splendid Suns by Khaled Hosseini See me for a head start this summer!***