

**Rising 10<sup>th</sup> Honors Literature & Composition**  
**SUMMER READING ASSIGNMENT**

**PART ONE: READING INFORMATIONAL**

*How to Read Literature Like a Professor: A Lively and Entertaining Guide to Reading Between the Lines* by Thomas C. Foster (2014 edition) (ISBN: 0062301675). Amazon currently offers 340 used & new copies starting from \$5.20.

Our goal is to teach you to understand and use the language of literature (or the “language of reading” as Foster calls it) so that you can discuss literature in an analytical and insightful manner. Not only will we use this book in 10<sup>th</sup> Honors Lit this year, this an excellent reference book that students can use in many of their high school and college literature courses.

Assignment Directions:

1. **Actively read** and **meaningfully annotate** each assigned chapter in your own copy of *How to Read Literature Like a Professor*. As you explore each chapter, write in the margins of your book any connections to any other books, plays, movies, comics/manga, stories, etc. that you already know.
2. **Thoughtfully and thoroughly answer** the following chapter-specific questions as you complete each assigned chapter. **Please type your responses and write in complete sentences.** (We know that some answers may be slightly shorter and others slightly longer, so you do not need to write pages and pages for these responses.) You may use “I” and answer the questions personally when appropriate.

| <u>ASSIGNED CHAPTERS</u>  | <u>CHAPTER QUESTIONS</u>   |
|---|--|
| <b>Introduction: How’d He Do That?</b>                                  | How do memory, symbol, and pattern affect the reading of literature? How does the recognition of patterns make it easier to read complicated literature? Discuss a time when your appreciation of a literary work was enhanced by understanding symbols or patterns.                           |
| <b>Chapter 1: Every Trip Is a Quest (Except When It’s Not)</b>          | You have read many stories about quests. What does Foster say the quest story is really about? What is a quest story you have read and enjoyed (other than those he mentions)?   |
| <b>Chapter 4: Now, Where Have I Seen Her Before</b>                     | Define intertextuality. What does Foster mean when he claims, “there’s no such thing as a wholly original work of literature”? Do you agree or disagree with his statements here? Explain.   |
| <b>Chapter 11: More Than It’s Gonna Hurt You: Concerning Violence</b>   | Present examples of the two kinds of violence found in literature (including film). Compare and contrast the effects in both examples.   |
| <b>Chapter 12: Is That a Symbol?</b>                                    | What is Foster trying to say about the recognizing and defining symbols? Does he mean that there is no right and wrong answer as to what functions as a symbol and what it stands for? Explain.  |
| <b>Chapter 19 Geography Matters... and Chapter 20 ...So Does Season</b> | In these chapters, Foster highlights how an author makes deliberate choices about his or her setting, and that readers should pay attention to these choices. What is a story that you have read where the geography or season greatly impacts the story, and how is the story impacted by it? |
| <b>Chapter 24: Don’t Read with Your Eyes</b>                            | Cliff Fadiman said, “When you reread a classic, you do not see more in the book than you did before; you see more in you than there was before.” How does this quote clarify or relate to Foster’s assertions in chapter 24?   |

## PART TWO: READING LITERARY: SHORT STORIES

**Now for the fun part:** Apply your summer scholarship of Foster’s guide (we are already so proud of you!) to your reading and analysis of the following collection of (amazing!) short stories. Feel free to read these short stories before and/or during (and certainly after!) you complete PART ONE. **Note:** This sounds like work (and it is), but it is also fun. 100 years ago, books were the norm, radio was new, and motion pictures were in their infancy. Hence, literature captures the imagination of everyone. We want you to capture the magic for yourself.

### Assignment Directions:

1. **Closely read, analyze, and enjoy all** six short stories. As you read (and reread) each story, refer back to your annotations and responses to the questions above on Foster’s *How to Read Literature Like a Professor*.
2. **Make the connections!** Prompted by the many ideas you learned from studying Foster’s book, create a dialectical (look it up) journal entry in response to **at least three (3) of the short stories**. There isn’t necessarily a “correct answer,” but you should support your connections with parallels and evidence from the text. Each dialectical journal entry must clearly establish a meaningful connection between an excerpt from the story and the focus of one or more of Foster’s chapters. Your dialectical journal must be typed in 12 pt., TNR font and formatted appropriately.

**REQUIRED SHORT STORIES:** (available online at [commonlit.org](http://commonlit.org) and/or other online sources)

1. **“Everyday Use” by Alice Walker:** A daughter comes home to visit her mother and sister with a new understanding of her identity. What is the importance of family heirlooms?
2. **“The Lady, or the Tiger?” by Frank Stockton:** A courtier faces punishment from a king and must make an important choice. Choose wisely!
3. **“The Most Dangerous Game” by Richard Connell:** Written long before *Survivor* hit the airwaves, a hunter becomes prey in this gripping tale of isolation and survival of the fittest.
4. **“Sandkings” by George RR Martin:** This fantastical tale by the author of *Game of Thrones* explores similar themes of envy, leadership...and pest control!
5. **“The Sound of Thunder” by Ray Bradbury:** A man travels back in time to when dinosaurs roamed the earth. What could go wrong?
6. **“To See the Invisible Man” by Robert Silverberg:** A speculative tale of sympathy and surveillance, set in a dystopian (yet strikingly familiar) world.

### EXAMPLE OF LITERARY DIALECTIAL JOURNAL:

#### *Nectar in a Sieve: Dialectical Journal*

| QUOTE FROM TEXT   | CONNECTION TO FOSTER   |
|---|--|
| <p>“The fruit is ripening, I thought, the birds are already here. Or perhaps mice. Leaving the beans I went to look, stooping to part the leaves with my hand. Why did the snake not strike at once? Was the cobra surprised into stillness that a human should dare to touch it? My hands recoiled from the coldness of serpent flesh, my nails clawed at my palms, the leaves I had parted moved back to cover it. For a moment my legs remained stiffly planted beside the pumpkins, then the blood came racing to my limbs again, and I ran from the spot screeching with fear and not looking behind me.</p> <p>Nathan came rushing to me, almost knocking me over, caught and shook me. ‘What is it, what is it?’ he shouted roughly. ‘A snake,’ I whispered, bereft of voice and breath. ‘A cobra. I touched it.’ He looked at me as if I were mad. ‘Go on and stay there,’ he said. I wanted only to fall at his feet in my terror, to beg him not to leave me alone, but he was staring at me unrelenting. At last I went, cowed, but with the waters of panic receding” (14).</p> | <p>I see connections to two of Foster’s chapters. The character’s encounter with the snake in a garden full of fruit brings to mind Foster’s discussion of biblical references in Chapter Six. Even though the character does not seem to experience a fall from innocence, the snake is still significant because of its symbolic value (Chapter 12); serpents are often thought to represent the Devil. Perhaps this Devil figure serves as a bad omen for what is to come, because on the very next page, the character becomes disappointed when giving birth to a female (rather than a male) child. Snakes are also thought to represent fertility, which is a major theme in this novel. Thus, the fact that the character encounters a snake prior to giving birth is probably not a simple coincidence.</p> |

**If you have any questions this summer, please send us an email. We look forward to working with you next year!**

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