



**MSD WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP
LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE 8X
SUMMER 2018 READING ASSIGNMENT**



Welcome to 8X L&L! This coming school year you will read texts that will challenge you think, encourage you to talk, and urge you to grow. In addition, you will write...A LOT! Some of the topics you will choose; some of the essays are assigned, but all of the writing experiences will refine your writer's voice and develop your craft.

To avoid the well-researched "summer slide" all students experience, we have designed a summer reading task for you. The purpose is two-fold: **one** to keep you reading and analyzing at a high level (or to introduce you to that work if you are new to honors) and **two** to provide a shared text we can all kick-off the year exploring and discussing.

The assignment includes one choice component with books from a range of genres and topics to encourage student/parent choice and topic exploration. So, research the books and pick something that interests you-whether it's a new topic, a new author, an old classic, or a longer book than you normally read...you do have ALL summer. The assignment has two parts, so make sure that you have both of them ready when you come back to school in August. If you lose this packet, the assignment can be found on each of the school websites for download.

Happy reading!
L&L 8X teachers

PART ONE: Prior to returning for school in August, select **ONE** book from the provided summer reading list. As you scan the included list and consider titles of interest, **WE STRONGLY ENCOURAGE YOU TO CONSULT A PARENT OR GUARDIAN TO ENSURE THOSE CHOICES ARE APPROPRIATE FOR YOU.**

1. **Read** the book you chose.
2. **Dialectical Journal:** You will complete five dialectical journal entries. Use the handout provided to complete your dialectical journal. See the examples provided to understand the format and the expectations for responses.
3. **Key Concept Analysis:** Choose one of the IB Key Concepts from the list provided. You will identify which concept you have chosen. Then, write one cohesive paragraph (between 6-10 sentences) explaining how the key concept is illustrated in the book you read.
4. **Submission:** You will bring these completed materials with you the first week of school and submit them to your 8X teacher. OR you can submit the assignment via Canvas at <https://msdwt.instructure.com/enroll/RXXYT8> Additionally, you may need to prepare for small group discussion or whole class conversation about your summer reading, so feel free to annotate your book accordingly.

PART TWO: Read the excerpt from *How to Read like a Professor: A Lively and Entertaining Guide to Reading Between the Lines* by Thomas C. Foster. Annotate the article. Complete the 3-2-1 note taking page. You will bring these completed materials with you the first week of school and submit them to your 8X teacher. OR OR you can submit the assignment via Canvas at <https://msdwt.instructure.com/enroll/RXXYT8>

PICK ONE BOOK FROM EITHER OF THESE TWO TABLES.

(For additional summer reading fun, you can always read more of these books); however, only one counts toward your summer reading assignment.)

All of the titles in this table are included on the **YOUNG HOOSIER BOOK AWARD NOMINEES** list for 2018-19. While these are the only books you can choose for the assignment, you can see the complete list here <http://www.ilfonline.org/page/YHBA>

TITLE	AUTHOR
<i>Need</i>	Joelle Charbonneau
<i>Ghost</i>	Jason Reynolds
<i>The Hidden Oracle</i>	Rick Riordan
<i>Salt to the Sea</i>	Ruta Sepetys
<i>Faceless</i>	Alyssa Sheinmel
<i>Scythe</i> (contains mature content and may not be appropriate for all readers)	Neal Shusterman
<i>Falling over Sideways</i>	Jordan Sonnenblick

Or, if you would rather read a **CLASSIC TITLE**, you may choose from any of the following books.
(Please check with your teacher if you need a copy of any of these books as you may be able to have one.)

TITLE	AUTHOR	LINK
<i>Les Miserables</i>	Victor Hugo	Abridged version
<i>The Adventures of Tom Sawyer</i>	Mark Twain	Recent Publication
<i>The Diary of a Young Girl</i>	Anne Frank	Mass market paperback

What is a Dialectical Journal? The term “Dialectic” means “the art or practice of arriving at the truth by using conversation involving question and answer.” A dialectical journal is a conversation you have with the text. This is not an activity of right or wrong, but rather an opportunity for you to document your unique journey with a text.

Why is it important to complete a Dialectical Journal? In order to deepen your understanding of the text, you must connect with the text. Your dialectical journal enables you to use your higher level thinking skills to engage in “conversation” with text. The dialectical journal requires that you connect, clarify, predict, reflect, and evaluate the text. Engaging a book in this way leads to increased comprehension and significance.

How do I fill out my Dialectical Journal? You will have a chart with five boxes. In the left column, you should jot down a quote or excerpt from the text including the page number(s). On the right side, you engage in a conversation with the text. You may choose to use any of the following sentence starters for your right side responses:

This character reminds me of ...because...	What would happen if...	The author’s tone is...
This doesn’t make sense because...	This idea/event seems to be important because...	Now I understand how/why...
The author uses...to symbolize...	I can imagine...	This setting reminds me of...
I notice...keeps happening; I think it means...	I predict...will happen because...	The...symbolizes...and it

Where can I find examples of Dialectical Journals to model? Below you will find a model from *The Boy in Striped Pajamas*.

“And one final thought came into her brother’s head as he watched the hundreds of people in the distance going about their business, and that was the fact that all of them—the small boys, the big boys, the fathers, the grandfathers, the uncles, the people who lived on their own on everybody’s road but didn’t seem to have any relatives at all—were wearing the same clothes as each other: a pair of grey striped pajamas with a grey striped cap on their heads” (38).	The pajamas symbolize togetherness and it means they are all a part of some group. If they were farmers, they might be dressed similarly not identically. The striped pajamas must be clothes that were given to them, not clothes that they chose. Maybe if they didn’t choose their clothes, they didn’t choose to be in this place.
“Shmuel blinked and shook his head. It was quite extraordinary. If it wasn’t for the fact that Bruno was nowhere near as skinny as the boys on his side of the fence, and not quite so pale either, it would have been difficult to tell them apart” (204).	This idea seems important because all children really are the same at heart. The categories are created by adults not children. This also seems important because Bruno blends in, which can be very dangerous on the wrong side of the fence.

1. **What is a Key Concept Analysis?** Analysis allows you to “deconstruct texts in order to identify their essential elements and their meaning” (Language and Literature Guide 7). This analysis challenges you to select one key concept, support your personal responses with textual evidence, and articulate your perspective concisely.
2. **How do I complete my key concept analysis?** You will choose one of the IB Key Concepts from the list provided. You will identify which concept you have chosen. Then, you will write one cohesive paragraph (between 6-10 sentences) explaining how the key concept is illustrated in the book you read. You will complete this key concept analysis for both of the books you selected. You may use different key concepts for each of the books (example: Book #1: Creativity; Book #2: Identity)
3. **What are the IB-MYP Key Concepts?**

Aesthetics	Change	Communication	Communities
Connections	Creativity	Culture	Development
Form	Global Interactions	Identity	Logic
Perspective	Relationships	Systems	Time, Place, & Space

4. **Where can I find a Key Concept Analysis to model?** Below you will find an example of a key concept analysis to model from Suzanne Collins *The Hunger Games*.

Title/Author	Key Concept	Analysis
<i>The Hunger Games</i> Suzanne Collins	Time, Space, Place	Suzanne Collins' novel <i>The Hunger Games</i> is a critique on the reconstruction of Panem, where time, space, and place allow fear to hold its citizens hostage. In District 12 where Katniss and her family live, starvation, shortages, and survival are every day worries. The communities are expected to participate in the lottery for the Hunger Games. Even though failure is a death sentence, winning could feed Katniss and her family and bring pride to her community. Because District 12 is a mining community with gritty roots, Katniss is determined to show Panem how smart, resourceful, and shrewd she can be, She has everything to prove. Ironically, Collins' book is horrifying to most teen readers. However, our own realities are not so far removed from the hunger games; Shows like <i>Survivor</i> and <i>Naked and Afraid</i> cast people in dangerous situations for our entertainment. Many people in America struggle daily with hunger and buy lottery tickets hoping six numbers will solve all of their problems. Collins' world in <i>The Hunger Games</i> illustrates how far societies will go to command order, exploit their weakest members, and entertain us all.

PART ONE: Dialectical Journal Form

Book Title/Author: _____

Excerpt from the Text (including page number)	Conversation and Connections

PART ONE: Dialectical Journal Form

Book Title/Author: _____

Excerpt from the Text (including page number)	Conversation and Connections

PART ONE: Key Concept Analysis

Title/Author	Key Concept
Analysis	

PART TWO: Read the following excerpt from *How to Read like a Professor: A Lively and Entertaining Guide to Reading Between the Lines* by Thomas C. Foster and complete the 3-2-1 below.

<p>3 meaningful quotes from the text (making connections and providing text evidence)</p>	<p>Copy the quote and page number HERE.</p> <p>1.</p> <p>2.</p> <p>3.</p>	<p>Explain why this quote was meaningful HERE.</p> <p>1.</p> <p>2.</p> <p>3.</p>
<p>2 questions you have for the author (inquiry)</p>	<p>1.</p> <p>2.</p>	
<p>1 way your reading of literature will change based on the excerpt (drawing conclusions)</p>		

Introduction

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How'd He Do That?

MR. LINDNER? THAT MILQUETOAST?

Right. Mr. Lindner the milquetoast. So what did you think the devil would look like? If he were red with a tail, horns, and cloven hooves, any fool could say no.

The class and I are discussing Lorraine Hansberry's *A Raisin in the Sun* (1959), one of the great plays of the American theater. The incredulous questions have come, as they often do, in response to my innocent suggestion that Mr. Lindner is the devil. The Youngers, an African American family in Chicago, have made a down payment on a house in an all-white neighborhood. Mr. Lindner, a meekly apologetic little man, has been dispatched from the neighborhood association, check in hand, to buy out the family's claim on the house. At first, Walter Lee Younger, the protagonist, confidently turns down the offer, believing that the family's money (in the form of a life insurance payment after his father's recent death) is secure. Shortly afterward, however, he discovers that two-thirds of that money has been stolen. All of a sudden the previously insulting offer comes to look like his financial salvation.

Bargains with the devil go back a long way in Western culture. In all the versions of the Faust legend, which is the dominant form of this type of story, the hero is offered something he desperately wants—power or knowledge or a fastball that will beat the Yankees—and all he has to give up is his soul. This pattern holds from the Elizabethan Christopher Marlowe's *Dr. Faustus* through the nineteenth-century Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's *Faust* to the twentieth century's Stephen Vincent Benét's "The Devil and Daniel Webster" and *Damn Yankees*. In Hansberry's version, when Mr. Lindner makes his offer, he doesn't demand Walter Lee's soul; in fact, he doesn't even know that he's demanding it. He is, though. Walter Lee can be rescued from the monetary crisis he has brought upon the family; all he has to do is admit that he's not the equal of the white residents who don't want him moving in, that his pride and self-respect, his *identity*, can be bought. If that's not selling your soul, then what is it?

The chief difference between Hansberry's version of the Faustian bargain and others is that Walter Lee ultimately resists the satanic temptation. Previous versions have been either tragic or comic depending on whether the devil successfully collects the soul at the end of the work. Here, the protagonist psychologically makes the deal but then looks at himself and at the true cost and recovers in time to reject the devil's—Mr. Lindner's—offer. The resulting play, for all its tears and anguish, is structurally comic—the tragic downfall threatened but avoided—and Walter Lee grows to heroic stature in wrestling with his own demons as well as the external one, Lindner, and coming through without falling.

A moment occurs in this exchange between professor and student when each of us adopts a look. My look says, "What, you don't get it?" Theirs says, "We don't get it. And we think you're making it up." We're having a communication problem. Basically, we've all read the same story, but we haven't used the same analytical

apparatus. If you've ever spent time in a literature classroom as a student or a professor, you know this moment. It may seem at times as if the professor is either inventing interpretations out of thin air or else performing parlor tricks, a sort of analytical sleight of hand.

Actually, neither of these is the case; rather, the professor, as the slightly more experienced reader, has acquired over the years the use of a certain "language of reading," something to which the students are only beginning to be introduced. What I'm talking about is a grammar of literature, a set of conventions and patterns, codes and rules, that we learn to employ in dealing with a piece of writing. Every language has a grammar, a set of rules that govern usage and meaning, and literary language is no different. It's all more or less arbitrary, of course, just like language itself. Take the word "arbitrary" as an example: it doesn't mean anything inherently; rather, at some point in our past we agreed that it would mean what it does, and it does so only in English (those sounds would be so much gibberish in Japanese or Finnish). So too with art: we decided to agree that perspective—the set of tricks artists use to provide the illusion of depth—was a good thing and vital to painting. This occurred during the Renaissance in Europe, but when Western and Oriental art encountered each other in the 1700s, Japanese artists and their audiences were serenely untroubled by the lack of perspective in their painting. No one felt it particularly essential to the experience of pictorial art.

Literature has its grammar, too. You knew that, of course. Even if you didn't know that, you knew from the structure of the preceding paragraph that it was coming. How? The grammar of the essay. You can read, and part of reading is knowing the conventions, recognizing them, and anticipating the results. When someone introduces a topic (the grammar of literature), then digresses to show other topics (language, art, music, dog training—it doesn't matter what examples; as soon as you see a couple of them, you recognize the pattern), you know he's coming back with an application of those examples to the main topic (voilà!). And he did. So now we're all happy, because the convention has been used, observed, noted, anticipated, and fulfilled. What more can you want from a paragraph?

Well, as I was saying before I so rudely digressed, so too in literature. Stories and novels have a very large set of conventions: types of characters, plot rhythms, chapter structures, point-of-view limitations. Poems have a great many of their own, involving form, structure, rhythm, rhyme. Plays, too. And then there are conventions that cross genre lines. Spring is largely universal. So is snow. So is darkness. And sleep. When spring is mentioned in a story, a poem, or a play, a veritable constellation of associations rises in our imaginative sky: youth, promise, new life, young lambs, children skipping ... on and on. And if we associate even further, that constellation may lead us to more abstract concepts such as rebirth, fertility, renewal.

Okay, let's say you're right and there is a set of conventions, a key to reading literature. How do I get so I can recognize these?

Same way you get to Carnegie Hall. Practice.

When lay readers encounter a fictive text, they focus, as they should, on the story and the characters: who are these people, what are they doing, and what wonderful or terrible things are happening to them? Such readers respond first of all, and sometimes only, to their reading on an emotional level; the work affects them, producing joy or revulsion, laughter or tears, anxiety or elation. In other words, they are emotionally and instinctively involved in the work. This is the response level that virtually every writer who has ever set pen to paper or fingertip to keyboard has hoped for when sending the novel, along with a prayer, to the publisher. When an English professor reads, on the other hand, he will accept the affective response level of the story (we don't mind a good cry when Little Nell dies), but a lot of his attention will be engaged by other elements of the novel. Where did that effect come from? Whom does this character resemble? Where have I seen this situation before? Didn't Dante (or Chaucer, or Merle Haggard) say that? If you learn to ask these questions, to see literary texts through these glasses, you will read and understand literature in a new light, and it'll become more rewarding and fun.

Memory. Symbol. Pattern. These are the three items that, more than any other, separate the professorial reader from the rest of the crowd. English professors, as a class, are cursed with memory. Whenever I read a new work, I spin the mental Rolodex looking for correspondences and corollaries—where have I seen his face, don't I know that theme? I can't *not* do it, although there are plenty of times when that ability is not something I want to exercise. Thirty minutes into Clint Eastwood's *Pale Rider* (1985), for instance, I thought, Okay, this is *Shane* (1953), and from there I didn't watch another frame of the movie without seeing Alan Ladd's face. This does not necessarily improve the experience of popular entertainment.

Professors also read, and think, symbolically. Everything is a symbol of something, it seems, until proven otherwise. We ask, Is this a metaphor? Is that an analogy? What does the thing over there signify? The kind of mind that works its way through undergraduate and then graduate classes in literature and criticism has a predisposition to see things as existing in themselves while simultaneously also representing something else. Grendel, the monster in the medieval epic *Beowulf* (eighth century A.D.), is an actual monster, but he can also symbolize (a) the hostility of the universe to human existence (a hostility that medieval Anglo-Saxons would have felt acutely) and (b) a darkness in human nature that only some higher aspect of ourselves (as symbolized by the title hero) can conquer. This predisposition to understand the world in symbolic terms is reinforced, of course, by years of training that encourages and rewards the symbolic imagination.

A related phenomenon in professorial reading is pattern recognition. Most professional students of literature learn to take in the foreground detail while seeing the patterns that the detail reveals. Like the symbolic imagination, this is a function of being able to distance oneself from the story, to look beyond the purely affective level of plot, drama, characters. Experience has proved to them that life and books fall into similar patterns. Nor is this skill exclusive to English professors. Good mechanics, the kind who used to fix cars before computerized diagnostics, use pattern recognition to diagnose engine troubles: if this and this are happening, then check that. Literature is full of patterns, and your reading experience will be much more

rewarding when you can step back from the work, even while you're reading it, and look for those patterns. When small children, very small children, begin to tell you a story, they put in every detail and every word they recall, with no sense that some features are more important than others. As they grow, they begin to display a greater sense of the plots of their stories—what elements actually add to the significance and which do not. So too with readers. Beginning students are often swamped with the mass of detail; the chief experience of reading *Dr. Zhivago* (1957) may be that they can't keep all the names straight. Wily veterans, on the other hand, will absorb those details, or possibly overlook them, to find the patterns, the routines, the archetypes at work in the background.

Let's look at an example of how the symbolic mind, the pattern observer, the powerful memory combine to offer a reading of a nonliterary situation. Let's say that a male subject you are studying exhibits behavior and makes statements that show him to be hostile toward his father but much warmer and more loving toward, even dependent on, his mother. Okay, that's just one guy, so no big deal. But you see it again in another person. And again. And again. You might start to think this is a pattern of behavior, in which case you would say to yourself, "Now where have I seen this before?" Your memory may dredge up something from experience, not your clinical work but a play you read long ago in your youth about a man who murders his father and marries his mother. Even though the current examples have nothing to do with drama, your symbolic imagination will allow you to connect the earlier instance of this pattern with the real-life examples in front of you at the moment. And your talent for nifty naming will come up with something to call this pattern: the Oedipal complex. As I said, not only English professors use these abilities. Sigmund Freud "reads" his patients the way a literary scholar reads texts, bringing the same sort of imaginative interpretation to understanding his cases that we try to bring to interpreting novels and poems and plays. His identification of the Oedipal complex is one of the great moments in the history of human thought, with as much literary as psychoanalytical significance.

What I hope to do, in the coming pages, is what I do in class: give readers a view of what goes on when professional students of literature do their thing, a broad introduction to the codes and patterns that inform our readings. I want my students not only to agree with me that, indeed, Mr. Lindner is an instance of the demonic tempter offering Walter Lee Younger a Faustian bargain; I want them to be able to reach that conclusion without me. I know they can, with practice, patience, and a bit of instruction. And so can you.

Excerpt from Foster, Thomas C. *How to Read Literature Like a Professor*. Harper Collins: New York, 2003 revised 2014.