

# Howard W. Blake 2020 Summer Reading for English Classes

Because it is important that students continue to read over the summer and have opportunities to think deeply about the choices that writers make, all students at Howard W. Blake should read a **minimum** of one book for their English classes. This book should be one that captures your interest and inspires you!

Within the first week of your return to school, you will turn in an assessment project to ensure that you read and understood the assigned text. A list of project choices accompanies these reading recommendations. You may also choose to complete a project for the SLAM event on eligible titles. For more info on SLAM contact Mr. Newhouse, librarian. **AP students have a different required assignment and should complete that assignment only.**

Your teacher may use the summer reading as a foundation of instruction during the opening of school, so it is very important that you read the book carefully. You are encouraged to record your thoughts about the book by using margin notes, Cornell notes, outlining, and/or a dialectical journal. Note-taking, however, is NOT required.

All students enrolled in English should read a work that fits the theme for their grade level during the **2020-2021** school year. A list of **suggested** works for each grade level and theme has been provided below. **NOTE: AP Language and AP Literature courses have specific summer reading assignments. Please be sure to see the separate assignment sheets for these courses.**

## **Ninth Grade (English 1/1H)** **Theme: Coming of Age**

- *Zora and Me* by Victoria Bond and T.R. Simon<sup>@</sup>
- *The Bone Houses* by Emily Lloyd-Jones<sup>@#</sup>
- *The Belles* by Dhonielle Clayton<sup>@</sup>
- *Defy the Stars* by Claudia Gray<sup>@</sup>
- *You Should See Me in a Crown* by Leah Johnson
- *You'd Be Mine* by Erin Hahn<sup>@#</sup>
- *Prince Charming* by Rachel Hawkins<sup>@</sup>
- *Whisper* by Lynette Noni<sup>@</sup>
- *Where I End and You Begin* by Preston Norton<sup>@#</sup>
- *They Called Us Enemy* by George Takei<sup>@</sup>
- *Shuri* by Nic Stone (Teentober Author coming to Hillsborough)

## **Tenth Grade (English 2/2H)** **Theme: Culture and Community**

- *10 Blind Dates* by Ashley Elston<sup>@#</sup>
- *Patron Saints of Nothing* by Randy Ribay<sup>@#</sup>
- *All Boys Aren't Blue* by George M. Johnson<sup>@</sup> (*mature themes*)
- *Samurai Rising: The Epic Life of Minamoto Yishune* by Pamela Turner<sup>@</sup>
- *Yes, No, Maybe So* by Becky Albertalli and Aisha Saeed<sup>@</sup>
- *My Sister Rosa* by Justine Larbalestier<sup>@</sup>
- *Storm and Fury* by Jennifer Armentrout<sup>@#</sup>
- *The Poet X* by Elizabeth Acevedo<sup>@</sup>
- *When We Were Lost* by Kevin Wignall<sup>@#</sup>
- *Odd One Out* by Nic Stone<sup>@</sup> (Teentober Author coming to Hillsborough)

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<p><b>Eleventh Grade (English 3/3H)</b> <b>Theme: The American Dream</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>No Crystal Stair: A Novel in Documents</i> by Vaunda Micheaux Nelson<sup>@</sup></li> <li>• <i>Tell Me Three Things</i> by Julie Buxbaum<sup>@</sup></li> <li>• <i>Internment</i> by Samira Achmed<sup>@</sup></li> <li>• <i>On the Come Up</i> by Angie Thomas<sup>@</sup></li> <li>• <i>A List of Cages</i> by Robin Roe<sup>@</sup></li> <li>• <i>Slay</i> by Brittney Morris<sup>@#</sup></li> <li>• <i>Moonrise</i> by Sarah Crossan<sup>@</sup></li> <li>• <i>Dry</i> by Neal and Jarrod Shusterman<sup>@</sup></li> <li>• <i>Sadie</i> by Courtney Summers<sup>@</sup></li> <li>• <i>Girls with Sharp Sticks</i> by Suzanne Young<sup>@#</sup></li> <li>• <i>Heroine</i> by Mindy McGinnis<sup>@#</sup></li> <li>• <i>The State of Us</i> by Shaun David Hutchinson</li> <li>• <i>Jackpot</i> by Nic Stone by Nic Stone<sup>@#</sup> (Teentober Author coming to Hillsborough)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Twelfth Grade (English 4/4H)</b> <b>Theme: Perception and Perspective</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Salt to the Sea</i> by Ruta Sepetys<sup>@</sup></li> <li>• <i>Scythe</i> by Neal Shusterman<sup>@</sup></li> <li>• <i>Killing November</i> by Adriana Mather<sup>@#</sup></li> <li>• <i>Learning to Breathe</i> by Janice Mather (Books Save Lives Award-winner; Event in Tampa Spring 2021)</li> <li>• <i>Solo</i> by Kwame Alexander<sup>@</sup></li> <li>• <i>A Curse So Dark and Lonely</i> by Brigid Kemmerer<sup>@</sup></li> <li>• <i>Crown of Coral and Pearl</i> by Mara Rutherford<sup>@#</sup></li> <li>• <i>Aurora Rising</i> by Amie Kaufman and Jay Kristoff<sup>@#</sup></li> <li>• <i>The Grace Year</i> by Kim Liggett<sup>@#</sup></li> <li>• <i>Brave Face</i> by Shaun David Hutchinson<sup>@</sup></li> <li>• <i>Dear Martin</i> by Nic Stone<sup>@</sup> (Teentober Author coming to Hillsborough)</li> </ul>
<p><b>AP Language (Juniors)(required)</b> <b>See separate assignment sheet</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Thank You For Arguing: What Aristotle, Lincoln, And Homer Simpson Can Teach Us About The Art Of Persuasion (Fully Revised and Updated Fourth Addition)</i> by Jay Heinrichs</li> </ul>	<p><b>AP Literature (Seniors)(required)</b> <b>See separate assignment sheet</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Oedipus</i> by Sophocles</li> <li>• <i>The Clouds</i> by Aristophanes</li> </ul>

### Find Your Reads Online:

- AXIS360 App and web-based: (lunch number is your passport in)
- Libby App (public library HAAL Pass, student number is lunch number and PIN is 4321).

### Looking for More High-Interest and #OwnVoices Diverse Reads:

- The #ProjectLit reading lists are student-chosen to be relevant and enthralling.
- Mr. Newhouse, your librarian is available all summer long to help you connect with the right book for you through Edsby and via Google Voice text at 813-609-2438. **Read something that sparks joy in you!**

@ indicates a book available for online check-out via Axis360 /Libby

# indicates books eligible for Media SLAM event

# Howard W. Blake 2020 Summer Reading for English Classes

## Summer Reading Assignment

Name \_\_\_\_\_ English Course \_\_\_\_\_

Title of novel \_\_\_\_\_ Author \_\_\_\_\_

### ASSIGNMENT OPTIONS FOR ALL STUDENTS TAKING

- ✓ English 1 Regular & Honors
  - ✓ English 2 Regular & Honors
  - ✓ English 3 Regular & Honors
  - ✓ English 4 Regular & Honors
- Circle the number of the project you have chosen to complete. NOTE: For all of the “writing” options, the length of the piece must be comparable to a traditional essay—two full pages minimum.

Choose ONE assignment to complete:

1. Write a letter, as yourself, to the main character, and write the character’s reply to your letter.
2. Write a different ending for the book.
3. Pretend you are a talk show host who is interviewing the main character; videotape or record the interview and include at least fifteen questions.
4. Create a travel brochure for the setting of the story; include explanations and pictures.
5. Create a book cover (front and back); include illustration, an enticing synopsis, author biography, and favorable reviews.
6. Recreate the book into a children’s story; include illustrations.
7. Explain why you think this book will or will not be read 100 years from now. Support your opinion by stating specific events in the story.
8. Write about one particular episode in the story that you remember most. Describe why you think it remains so clear; be specific.
9. Write a ballad or a song about the main characters and events in your story; set the words to the music of a popular song.
10. Write an original poem depicting the setting, characters, and plot.
11. Describe three characters from the story in detail. List specific reasons why you would or would not want to get to know these people.
12. Design a movie poster depicting the climax of the story. Include an explanation of your illustration on the back of the poster.
13. Create ten interview questions and choose three characters to interview; provide each character’s answers.
14. Make a comic strip detailing the main events in your book.
15. Create a newspaper page relating to your book; include title, pictures and advertisements.

# Howard W. Blake 2020 Summer Reading for English Classes

## STUDENT LITERACY AND MEDIA (SLAM) ENTRIES

### 2D CREATIVE EXPRESSION ENTRIES

Purpose of the 2D and 3D Creative Expression piece is to encourage creativity and a personal connection with a 2020-21 Florida Teens Read book.

Must be an individual project.

Original 2D Creative Expression can include drawing, painting, collage, illustrated written response (such as poem or short story) or digital media.

A 2D Creative Expression piece must be mounted and not exceed 11"x14" including mat.

Examples of 3D Creative Expression include, but are not limited to, Ceramics, Sculpture, Mixed Media, Fine Crafts (jewelry, stained glass, mosaic), Robotics, Diorama, Board Game, etc.

3D Creative Expression works must be stable and not exceed 4'X4'X4' and 30 lbs. Student must be able to transport, carry and set up their 3D work.

A Reader's Statement communicating how the art work was inspired by the book, not to exceed 300 words, must be included.

Entry must be appropriate for a "PG" audience.

### VIDEO CREATIVE EXPRESSION ENTRIES

Purpose of a Video Creative Expression entry is to encourage creativity and a personal connection to literature while promoting a 2020-21 FTR book.

Individual or groups (no more than 3) are accepted.

Videos must not exceed 1-minute in length.

Must include:

- Visuals
- Audio
- Title and Author
- Book Citation

Video Creative Expression entries can include, but are not limited to, book trailers, reader's theater, stop-motion-animation, music and/or dance inspired by the book.

Book cover can be used but are not required.

Student may not use video, music or images that you do not have copyright approval.

Student is responsible for copyright consideration, which must be included with the entry.

A Reader's Statement communicating how the video was inspired by the book, not to exceed 300 words, must be included.

Entry must be appropriate for a "PG" audience.

**Advanced Placement English Language and Composition**  
**Summer Reading 2020-2021**  
**Mr. S. Johnson**

The AP English Language and Composition course is designed to substitute for a college composition course; therefore, you will be required to read complex texts with understanding as well as to enrich your prose in order to communicate your ideas effectively to mature audiences. You will learn how to analyze and interpret exemplary writing by discerning and explaining the author's use of rhetorical strategies and techniques, eventually applying many of these techniques to your own writing. In order to prepare for our discussions, you are required to read **one (1)** selection over the summer. As you read, you will be required to complete the tasks associated with the text. Be sure to consider the tasks before, during, and after reading the required text. The work for these tasks will be due during the first week of class in August.

The purpose of the summer reading and writing assignment is to prepare you for the demanding nature of the class, while also exposing you to a variety of writing styles, modes, and purposes. While the class is considered a college level course and will be challenging, you should enjoy the content. The ultimate goal of the AP English Language and Composition class is to teach you the art of reading, writing, and critical thinking; **it is NOT intended to help you maintain a perfect grade point average**. The AP Exam is also quite important; you will be prepared accordingly for it.

Students and parents should be aware that failing to complete the summer reading is not a reason to request a schedule change; additionally, students who do not complete the summer assignments will begin the quarter with several zeroes, which can cause a significant decrease in the quarter grade. Students can overcome zeroes associated with summer reading, but doing so will require diligence and excellence in completing all other work.

Attached are the details of the summer assignment. You may also find the details of the summer reading assignment on the Blake High School website. I suggest you begin early and not wait until the last two weeks of the summer to complete this. If you have questions regarding the assignment, please email me at [steven.johnson@sdhc.k12.fl.us](mailto:steven.johnson@sdhc.k12.fl.us)

Enjoy your summer reading!

P.S. If you are aware of anyone who may have enrolled late for this class, please pass this information along or have him or her contact the school.

## What You Need to Know about AP Language

1. The purpose of this class is to introduce students to a wide variety of college-level reading, writing, and analysis.
2. Students are to be aware of the rigorous nature of an AP English course.
3. Reading and writing assignments will be extensive and frequent (most likely every day).
4. It is common to be working on two or three different assignments at once.
5. Thoughtful analysis and effort are expected and required.
6. Regular attendance is also required for successful completion of the course.
7. Students who take this course should want to be in the class, and their classroom attitude should reflect respect for the teacher, the course, and other students.
8. Do not assume that high grades received in previous honors classes will guarantee an A in this class.
9. A strong work ethic and a commitment to growing as a learner are necessary. And growing is never easy.
10. Students who are involved in many other school-related activities should develop and rely on excellent time-management and study skills.



**Summer reading selection: Please read the text and complete the following assignments in order.**

**Book 1: *Thank You For Arguing: What Aristotle, Lincoln, And Homer Simpson Can Teach Us About The Art Of Persuasion (Fully Revised and Updated Fourth Addition)* by Jay Heinrichs. (required)**

**Book :1 *Thank You For Arguing: What Aristotle, Lincoln, And Homer Simpson Can Teach Us About The Art Of Persuasion (Fully Revised and Updated Fourth Addition)* by Jay Heinrichs**

This book will introduce you to the art of rhetoric and academic arguments. Heinrichs has divided his informative, yet entertaining, book of lessons into five sections (*Introduction, Offense, Defense, Advanced Offense, & Advanced Agreement*). He also provides appendices, which include a summary of the main rhetorical tools and a glossary of rhetorical terms.

**Task # 1: Preliminary Analysis**

Read through the entire assignment so that you understand each part of the assignment before you begin.

1. You will need to copy or create a two-column document with approximately 30 rows. As you type, number the rows as you go. Rows do not need to be uniform in size.
2. Write the chapter title in big, bold letters near the top of the left column in each row.
3. Cite page numbers for the information in each row.
4. The document must cover the entire span of the book.
5. The required information should be easy to find and understand. Use lists and bullets for information unless the instructions tell you to use complete sentences.

**Prepare your document as follows:**

**Row #1: Bibliographic entry.**

In the first row, write a bibliographic entry for the work. Merge the cells to get one joined row. Use Modern Language Association (MLA) style. (Websites abound with MLA style instructions, examples, and even MLA entry “generators.”)

**Row #2: Introduction.**

Respond to the author’s explanation about why he wrote this book. Answer these questions: What do you expect from the book after reading the introduction? Do the marginal notes help or hinder your understanding? What tone do you hear when you read? What about the writing makes you think this? Write in complete sentences. You may wish to merge the columns of the last row in order to have sufficient space for your response.

**Row #3 through 29: Quotations.**

Choose what you believe to be the (2) most important quotations *in each chapter*. In the left column, explain why you chose each one and how it fits into the book as a whole. In the right column, write a bulleted list of terms and definitions presented in the chapter. Define the terms in your own words to demonstrate understanding of the concept.

**Row # 30: Reflection.**

Write a personal reflection. What is your new understanding of rhetoric? How much of the information is new to you? How has this text changed your perception of the rhetoric around you? Write this in complete sentences. You may wish to merge the columns of the last row in order to have sufficient space for your reflection.

**Example:**

<p>Rottenberg, Annette T., and Donna Haisty Winchell. <i>Elements of Argument: A Text and Reader</i>. 10th ed. Boston, MA: Bedford/St. Martins, 2012. Print.</p>	
<p>Row 1</p> <p>Create your response to the introduction in this row.</p>	
<p>Row 2</p>	
<p><b>“Approaches to Argument” (3-33)</b></p> <p>“In a democratic society of competing interests and values, a compromise between two or more extreme points of view may be the only viable solution to a vexing problem”(3).</p> <p>In order to argue, we need to be able to compromise. The techniques discussed in the book relate to clearly defining the perspective of both sides and reaching a resolution or conclusion.</p> <p>“It is addressing this relationship between audience and subject that rhetorical theories differ most in their approach” (7).</p> <p>If we can understand the relationship of speaker, purpose, and audience, we can analyze and create arguments.</p>	<p>Claim- a thesis or main idea</p> <p>Support- evidence, data, back-up</p> <p>Warrant-a belief or principle that is taken for granted</p> <p>Syllogism- a simple logical structure in which the conclusion follows logically from the given premises</p>
<p>Row 3</p>	
<p>Rows 4 - 29</p> <p>Create your reflection in the space provided here.</p>	
<p>Row 30</p>	

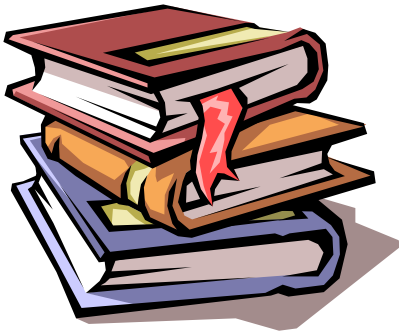


**Task # 2 Testing:** Students will be tested on the information presented in Heinrich's book during the first two weeks of school. To prepare, students should visit Arguelab.com and take the practice quizzes and tests. Students should also read and study the Appendixes at the back of the book if they wish to excel.

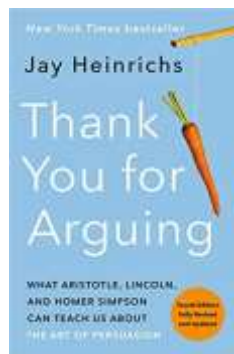
**Task # 3: Chapter Discussion** *This task will be completed upon return to school in August.*

During the first week of school, you will be assigned a specific chapter for which you will serve as a discussion leader for the class. Additionally, you will have specific questions from your assigned chapter that you will answer prior to leading your chapter discussion.

**Time Management Tip:** College professors assign long-term tasks, requiring many pages of reading before a long paper is due or exam given. To survive, successful college students must break the tasks into manageable chunks. Summer reading is great practice for this college skill. Make sure you devise a reading and writing plan that will allow you to complete the assigned reading and tasks before school begins in August.



**The canon of literature deemed appropriate for Pre-AP and AP courses includes works that challenge us, sometimes making us uncomfortable and sometimes warming our hearts. Literature bears witness to the tragedy and the triumph of mankind, to the full range of the human experience, even occasionally its most coarse and undignified moments. Students will be expected to read every assigned work.**



**Note to parents and students:** These summer reading books are recommended for Advanced Placement students. The materials covered in these books are designed to generate controversy and argument in order for the new rhetorician to learn how we communicate rhetorically within our society. If there is an objection to any one of the books, an alternative assignment will be provided.

## **Thank You for Arguing Dialectical Journal Template**

Bibliographic Information (MLA citation please)	
Introduction: What do you expect from the book after reading the introduction? Do the marginal notes help or hinder your understanding? What tone do you hear when you read? What about the writing makes you think this? Write in complete sentences.	
<p><b>**Example, do not use**</b></p> <p><b>Chapter 0: Thank you for Arguing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (Quote #1 with explanation) “In a democratic society of competing interests and values, a compromise between two or more extreme points of view may be the only viable solution to a vexing problem”(3). In order to argue, we need to be able to compromise. The techniques discussed in the book relate to clearly defining the perspective of both sides and reaching a resolution or conclusion.</li> <li>• (Quote #2 with Explanation) “It is addressing this relationship between audience and subject that rhetorical theories differ most in their approach” (7). If we can understand the relationship of speaker, purpose, and audience, we can analyze and create arguments.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (Term/definition in your own words #1) Claim- a thesis or main idea Support- evidence, data, back-up</li> <li>• (Term/definition in your own words #2) Warrant-a belief or principle that is taken for granted</li> <li>• (Term/definition in your own words #3) Syllogism- a simple logical structure in which the conclusion follows logically from the given premises)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Chapter 1: Open Your Eyes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (Quote #1 with explanation and citation)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (Term/definition in your own words #1)</li> <li>• (Term/definition in your own words #2)</li> </ul>

## ***Thank You for Arguing* Dialectical Journal Template**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (Quote #2 with explanation and citation)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (Term/definition in your own words #3)</li> <li>• (Write down all important terms/definitions, not limited to three)</li> </ul>
<b>Chapter 2: Set Your Goals</b>	
<b>Chapter 3: Control the Tense</b>	
<b>Chapter 4: Soften Them Up</b>	
<b>Chapter 5: Get Them to Like you</b>	
<b>Chapter 6: Make Them Listen</b>	
<b>Chapter 7: Use Your Craft</b>	
<b>Chapter 8: Show You Care</b>	
<b>Chapter 9: Control the Mood</b>	
<b>Chapter 10: Turn the Volume Down</b>	
<b>Chapter 11: Gain the High Ground</b>	
<b>Chapter 12: Persuade on Your terms</b>	
<b>Chapter 13: Control the Argument</b>	
<b>Chapter 14: Make a Connection</b>	
<b>Chapter 15: Spot Fallacies</b>	
<b>Chapter 16: Call a Foul</b>	
<b>Chapter 17: Know Whom to Trust</b>	
<b>Chapter 18: Find the Sweet Spot</b>	
<b>Chapter 19: Deal with a Bully</b>	
<b>Chapter 20: Get Instant Cleverness</b>	
<b>Chapter 21: Change Reality</b>	
<b>Chapter 22: Recover from a Screw-Up</b>	
<b>Chapter 23: Seize the Occasion</b>	
<b>Chapter 24: Use the Right Medium</b>	
<b>Chapter 25: Give a Persuasive Talk</b>	
<b>Chapter 26: Capture your Audience</b>	
<b>Chapter 27: Write a Persuasive Essay</b>	

## ***Thank You for Arguing* Dialectical Journal Template**

<b>Chapter 28: Use the Right Tools</b>	
<b>Chapter 29: Run an Agreeable Country</b>	
Reflection. Write a personal reflection. What is your new understanding of rhetoric? How much of the information is new to you? How has this text changed your perception of the rhetoric around you? Write this in complete sentences.	

**AP ENGLISH LITERATURE & COMPOSITION**  
**SUMMER READING ASSIGNMENT 2020-2021**  
**HOWARD W. BLAKE HIGH SCHOOL**  
**Mrs. B. Walker**

Students will read **two** Greek plays-*Oedipus* and *The Clouds*- and complete **four assignments**. Links have been provided below.

**Play 1- *Oedipus* by Sophocles**

**WATCH**-Introduction to Greek Tragedy- video by National Theatre

Watch the following video for insight on Greek Theatre

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dSr6mP-zxUc>

**READ**- Background provided background information

**READ--*Oedipus* by Sophocles-** a digital copy can be found at

<http://classics.mit.edu/Sophocles/oedipus.html>

**COMPLETE**- Two provided assignments

**Background Information about the Plays-Before you read**

**Typical Structure of a Tragedy**

1. **Prologue:** A monologue or dialogue preceding the entry of the chorus, which presents the tragedy's topic.
2. **Parode (Entrance Ode):** The entry chant of the chorus, often in an anapestic (short-short-long) marching rhythm (four feet per line). Generally, they remain on stage throughout the remainder of the play. Although they wear masks, their dancing is expressive, as conveyed by the hands, arms and body. Typically the parode and other choral odes involve the following parts, repeated in order several times:
  1. *Strophê (Turn):* A stanza in which the chorus moves in one direction (toward the altar).
  2. *Antistrophê (Counter-Turn):* The following stanza, in which it moves in the opposite direction. The antistrophe is in the same meter as the strophe.
  3. *Epode (After-Song):* The epode is in a different, but related, meter to the strophe and antistrophe, and is chanted by the chorus standing still. The epode is often omitted, so there may be a series of strophe-antistrophe pairs without intervening epodes.
3. **Episode:** There are several *episodes* (typically 3-5) in which one or two actors interact with the chorus. They are, at least in part, sung or chanted. Speeches and dialogue are typically iambic hexameter: six iambs (short-long) per line, but rhythmic anapests are also common. In lyric passages the meters are treated flexibly. Each episode is terminated by a *stasimon*:
4. **Stasimon (Stationary Song):** A choral ode in which the chorus may comment on or react to the preceding episode.
5. **Exode (Exit Ode):** The exit song of the chorus after the last episode.

**AP ENGLISH LITERATURE & COMPOSITION**  
**SUMMER READING ASSIGNMENT 2020-2021**  
**HOWARD W. BLAKE HIGH SCHOOL**  
**Mrs. B. Walker**

### **The Story of Oedipus**

The story of Oedipus is perhaps the best known of all the Greek legends. Not only has it been immortalized in Sophocles' Oedipus Tyrannus—but thanks to Sigmund Freud, the name Oedipus has also acquired a significance far beyond that associated with it in antiquity. Oedipus is probably not someone whom you would identify as a “hero.” But he is.

Let's consider the ways in which Oedipus fulfills the hero criteria. While his actual birth might not be so remarkable, the circumstances surrounding it are. The oracle tells Oedipus' father Laius, the King of Thebes, that his son will kill him. When Oedipus is born, Laius ties his hands and feet and leaves him on a mountainside to die. A shepherd rescues Oedipus and brings him to the king of Corinth, who raises Oedipus. After reaching manhood, Oedipus sets out on a journey. He meets an old man at a crossroads who is attended by five servants. He gets into an argument with the old man, and kills him along with four of his servants. The old man, however, is his father Laius, but Oedipus does not learn this for many years.

Oedipus wanders to Thebes, where he meets the Sphinx, a terrible creature who guards the gates of the city. The Sphinx devours all those who pass by and cannot answer the riddle: What walks on four legs in the morning, two legs at noon, and three legs at night? Oedipus gives the correct answer—a human being, who crawls on all fours when young, then walks upright as a youth, then in old age uses a cane. The Sphinx is so distraught and angry when Oedipus answers the riddle that she kills herself. The Thebans, not knowing it is Oedipus who has killed Laius their king, reward him with an offer of marriage to Jocasta the Queen. Oedipus, unaware that Jocasta is his mother, marries her, and they have four children. After many years, a plague strikes the city, and the oracle proclaims that it will last until the murderer of Laius is discovered. Oedipus diligently begins the search. He finds that not only has he killed Laius, but also that he has married his mother. Jocasta kills herself when she learns these truths, and Oedipus puts his eyes out.

We see, then, that Oedipus fulfills the hero requirements because he overcomes obstacles, first at the hands of his own father, and then in the form of the Sphinx. Of the other hardships he faces, none is more painful than the discovery that he has killed his father, married his own mother, and fathered children by her.

The play concludes with the death of Oedipus in a suburb of Athens, to which he had wandered. His passing occurs “without pain”—it was “more than mortal, a miracle” (Classical Mythology by Mark P. O. Morford and Robert J. Lenardon. 6th ed. White Plains, NY: Longman Publishers, 1998. p. 307). With those words Sophocles clearly marks Oedipus as a hero, a mortal singled out by the gods and who, as an object of worship, achieved no small measure of immortality.-----From University of Washington

--As you read, you look for the dramatic irony, imagery of sight/blindness, character of Oedipus as a seeker of truth. Look at the role of the chorus to the unfolding of the story.

**Assignment 1:** Create a visual representing the imagery throughout the play Oedipus. Include significant quotes from the play and explain how they related to the imagery you choose to depict. (8-10 quotes)

**Assignment 2:** Make map of the journey Oedipus takes toward the truth. Pinpoint/list his decisions, orders, and opponents.

**AP ENGLISH LITERATURE & COMPOSITION**  
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**Play 2- *The Clouds* by Aristophanes**

**READ**- Background provided background information from  
<https://www.cummingsstudyguides.net/Guides2/Clouds.html#top>

**READ**-*The Clouds* by Aristophanes (450-388 BC)  
Digital copy can be found at <http://classics.mit.edu/Aristophanes/clouds.html>

**COMPLETE**- Two provided assignments

**Background Information about the Plays-Before you read**

**Type of Work**

*The Clouds*, a fictional stage play based on real people and events, is classified as *old comedy*. It was first performed in Athens in March of 423 BC during a competition known as the Greater Dionysia. (In the Dionysia, dramatists competed for prizes.) The judges of the competition awarded first prize to another playwright, Cratinus, for his comedy *The Bottle*. Subsequently, Aristophanes revised *The Clouds*, presumably in attempt to improve it, and only the second version survives today. The revised play includes a passage in which the chorus chides the Dionysia audience, in particular the judges of the competition, for choosing *The Bottle* over *The Clouds*.

**What Was Old Comedy?**

In Greece of the Fifth Century, BC., *old comedy* was a genre of comedy that displayed great imagination and used cutthroat satire, caricature, and sometimes vulgar dialogue to ridicule public figures, politics, ideas, trends, and institutions. Aristophanes was the unsurpassed master of old comedy. In the Fourth Century, old comedy was succeeded by a lighter, less caustic form of comedy that centered on fictional characters drawn from everyday life rather than on public figures, politics, and so on. This genre was appropriately labeled *new comedy*.

**Structure of Old Comedy**

Old comedy usually contained the following structural elements in a typical play:

1. **Prologos**: Prologue that begins the play with dialogue indicating the focus or theme of the play. In *The Clouds*, the dialogue in the prologos informs the audience that Strepsiades wants to learn how to talk his way out of debt. He enrolls in the thinking shop to acquire the necessary skills.
2. **Parodos** (pronunciation: PAIR uh doss): (1) Song sung by the chorus when it enters; (2) the moment when the chorus enters. In *The Clouds*, the cloud goddesses making up the chorus enter to the sound of thunderclaps while singing a song (called a *parode*) announcing their descent to earth. In their song, they reveal that their sympathies lie with the characters and ideas that Aristophanes is satirizing. (However, the cloud goddesses speak for Aristophanes in the parabasis (discussed below).
3. **Episode(s)**: scene in which the dialogue involves one or two characters and the chorus.
4. **Agon** (pronunciation: AG ohn): a debate between characters. In *The Clouds*, two teachers at the thinking shop debate the validity of traditional values and logical reasoning (which Aristophanes supports) vs

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new ideas and deceptive reasoning (which, according to Aristophanes, the sophists support). The names of the teachers are Just Cause (or Right Logic, representing truth, justice, self-discipline, and established customs and religious beliefs) and Unjust Cause (or Wrong Logic, representing specious reasoning, loose living, and, in general, rejection of established customs and religious beliefs). Another agon near the end of the play pits Strepsiades against his son, Phidippides. Some plays had more than one agon.

5. **Parabasis** (puh RAB uh sis): an ode in which the chorus addresses the audience to express opinions of the author, including his views on politics, social trends, and other topics. In *The Clouds* the chorus scolds the audience for its lukewarm reception of an earlier production of the play.
6. **Stasimon(s)** (pronunciation: STASS uh monz): Scenes in which the chorus sings a song, uninterrupted by dialogue. Usually, other characters are not present.
7. **Exodos** (EX uh doss): Exit scene; final part of the play. In the exodos in *The Clouds*, Strepsiades burns down the thinking shop.

### Setting

The action is set in Athens, Greece, in 423 BC, the year the play debuted on the stage. The play opens in the home of a citizen named Strepsiades and shifts to a gathering place for philosophers called a "thinking shop" (Greek transliteration: *phrontisterion*), similar to the modern "think tank."

### Characters

**Strepsiades:** Elderly Athenian farmer who bemoans his indebtedness, which results mostly from the unbridled spending of his good-for-nothing son, Phidippides. The boy loves to train and race horses and runs up bills buying a new horse, a chariot, and wheels. In English, *Strepsiades* means, loosely, any or all of the following: *twisty, scheming, slippery, deceptive*.

**Phidippides:** Strepsiades's wastrel son, who spends his time sleeping soundly and driving horses. (His name is also spelled *Pheidippides* in some translations.)

**Socrates:** Philosopher who operates a thinking shop (Greek transliteration: *phrontisterion*) near the home of Strepsiades. Strepsiades enrolls as a student of Socrates in hopes of learning how to trick his creditors out of collecting what he owes them.

**Chorus:** Goddesses who make up the clouds. They interact with the characters in the play and comment on the wisdom or folly of the decisions the characters make. The cloud goddesses regard themselves as highly important, for they bring the rain that grows the crops.

**Chaerephon:** Follower and loyal friend of Socrates. According to legend, the oracle at Delphi told Chaerephon (in an encounter not discussed in *The Clouds*) that "no man is wiser than Socrates."

**Disciples of Socrates:** They greet Strepsiades at the thinking shop and introduce him to the philosophical arts.  
**Pasias, Amynias:** Creditors of Strepsiades.

**Witness:** When Pasias demands the money Strepsiades owes him, the witness is present to support Pasias.



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Wife of Strepsiades: She does not speak in the play. But Strepsiades refers to her several times, saying he regrets marrying her because she gave him a foolish son. He also defends her at another time.

Servant boy: He lights a lamp that Strepsiades uses to calculate his debts.

Phidon of Cicyna: Father of Strepsiades. Phidon has no speaking part.

### **Purpose of the Play**

When Aristophanes staged *The Clouds*, he wanted to make people laugh. And he has been succeeding in that goal for more than 2,400 years, for the play is a masterly comedy that appeals to people of every time and place. He also wanted to deliver a message to theater audiences of Fifth Century Athens: that certain philosophers, in particular the sophists, were undermining traditional values and thus were a danger to society. For additional information on the sophists and the serious message behind the play, see Theme, below.

### **Plot Summary**

Unable to sleep, Strepsiades sits up in bed. In the same bedroom are two servants and his son, Phidippides, sleeping soundly. Strepsiades lies down again to try to sleep but immediately sits back up, anxious about money matters in general and the debts his son has incurred in particular. After ordering a servant boy to light a lamp, Strepsiades calculates his debts, noting that he owes twelve minae to Pasion for a horse for his son. (In ancient times a mina, singular of *minae*, was equal to 1/60 of a talent, one hundred drachmas, or fifty shekels.)

Meanwhile, Phidippides talks in his sleep about horses. Day and night, all he thinks about is driving horses. Strepsiades gets stuck with the bills to support the young man's equestrian hobby, including a bill for 3 minae to Arynias for a chariot and a pair of wheels. Phidippides awakens and asks his father why he is so restless at night. Strepsiades says the cause is all the debts his son is running up. Phidippides falls back to sleep. Strepsiades then laments the day he got married and ruminates about the birth of his son and his wife's prediction that Phidippides would one day drive his own chariot. At that time, Strepsiades recalls, he predicted Phidippides was destined to drive goats.

Strepsiades awakens Phidippides and asks him to reform and do his father's bidding. Phidippides swears that he will do whatever his father asks. Strepsiades then points to a house outside where philosophers convene to hatch great ideas. It is a "thinking shop"—or, in modern terms, a think tank. He asks his son to enroll at the shop to become a great philosopher who can think Strepsiades out of debt. The youth recoils, saying only quacks and shoeless fellows, including Socrates and Chaerephon, meet there. Strepsiades then decides to enroll at the think shop himself to learn the art of double talk.

### **Theme**

A serious theme underlies this comedy, namely: Ideas espoused by radical thinkers like the sophists and by highly imaginative thinkers like Socrates are undermining traditional values and corrupting the morals of youths. The sophists maintained that the guiding principles of a society, such as justice and truth, were relative concepts—that is, these principles changed according to the needs of men in a particular time and place. What

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was right and just in Athens was not necessarily right and just in another society. One man's virtue could be another man's vice.

In teaching their students, the sophists emphasized the art of argumentative discourse and came to be associated with deceptive and specious reasoning, lampooned effectively in *The Clouds*. Another target of Aristophanes was Socrates, along with his associate, Chaerephon. Ironically, Socrates, like Aristophanes, renounced the methods and ideas of the sophists. Nevertheless, Socrates angered the establishment (1) by declaring that the validity of many long-standing precepts could not be proved by logical reasoning, (2) by rejecting the Olympian gods and sometimes speaking of a single intelligent being as the creator of the universe, and (3) by spreading “dangerous” ideas among young people. In addition, he alienated many Athenians because he was ugly and untidy (sometimes neglecting to bathe for a long while), wore simple apparel, and walked barefoot through the streets. Thus, his ideas and eccentricities made him a ripe subject for ridicule.

### **Universality**

Although Aristophanes focuses his plays on specific people, ideas, and events of his time and place, his themes appeal to audiences of every age and every country. In other words, his plays have universal appeal. For example, in 2003, as part of a worldwide protest against the impending U.S. invasion of Iraq, sixty countries staged more than a thousand performances of his play *Lysistrata* to point up the folly of war. *The Clouds* remains popular today because it exposes public figures who rely on specious reasoning to promote their agendas and gain followers.

### **Stichomythia**

Stichomythia (stik uh MITH e uh) consists of brief, alternating lines of dialogue spoken in rapid-fire succession. It occurs frequently in Greek drama, especially when characters are arguing or expressing strong emotions. Following is an example of stichomythia in *The Clouds*. Unjust Cause and Just Cause are insulting each other:

Unj. You are a dotard and absurd.  
Just You are debauched and shameless.  
Unj. You have spoken roses of me.  
Just And a dirty lickspittle.  
Unj. You crown me with lilies.  
Just And a parricide.  
Unj. You don't know that you are sprinkling me with  
gold.  
Just Certainly not so formerly, but with lead.  
Unj. But now this is an ornament to me.  
Just You are very impudent.  
Unj. And you are antiquated.

### **Climax**

The climax occurs when Phidippides beats his father, then uses double talk (or sophistry) to justify the beating.

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### **What Is Philosophy?**

Philosophy is a discipline that attempts to identify the basic principles governing all existing things, as well as the makeup of these things, through investigations that rely on the application of reason rather than faith. Unlike science, philosophy permits intelligent speculation, via logical arguments, on what is or is not true. For example, the great Italian philosopher St. Thomas Aquinas (AD 1225-1274) used reason alone to form his famous arguments for the existence of God. In developing his ideas, Aquinas relied heavily on the philosophy of Aristotle, who was a pupil of Plato. Plato, in turn, was a pupil of Socrates. The word *philosophy* comes from the Greek word *philosophia*, meaning *love of wisdom*.

### **Who Were the Sophists?**

The sophists were traveling teachers who provided an education for a fee. They maintained that the guiding principles of a society, such as justice and truth, were relative concepts—that is, these principles changed according to the needs of men in a particular time and place. What was right and just in Athens was not necessarily right and just in another society. One man's virtue could be another man's vice. In teaching their students, the sophists emphasized the art of argumentative discourse and came to be associated with deceptive and specious reasoning, lampooned effectively in *The Clouds*. Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle—the great Greek thinkers who laid the foundations for western philosophy—all repudiated the sophists.

### **Who Was Socrates?**

Socrates was a gifted thinker of ancient Athens who helped lay the foundation of western philosophy. The methods he used and the concepts he proposed, along with his courageous defense of his ideas against his enemies, profoundly influenced the philosophical and moral tenor of western thought over the centuries. His refusal to compromise his intellectual integrity in the face of a death sentence set an example for all the world to follow. For further information, see the Socrates Study Guide on this site.

**Study Questions and Essay Topics-** Consider these for discussion upon your return to school.

- After researching the life of Socrates, express your view on whether Aristophanes was justified in lampooning the philosopher.
- After researching the sophists of ancient Athens, express your view on whether Aristophanes was justified in lampooning these traveling teachers.
- In *The Clouds*, Aristophanes was ridiculing specific people and ideas of his time and place. However, his observations can apply to many other people and ideas of other times and ages. Explain why.
- In a good dictionary, look up the term Socratic irony. Then explain whether you believe Socratic irony is an effective way to expose defective teachings, beliefs, and precepts.
- Aristophanes was the master of old comedy (see Type of Work, above), a popular genre in the Fifth Century, B.C. Old comedy was succeeded in the Fourth Century, B.C., by a gentler type of comedy called new comedy. Its master was Menander. Write an essay that compares and contrasts old comedy and new comedy.

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**Assignment 3**-Answer the following:

What are the funnest parts? What and who are being ridiculed? How is the satire achieved? What comedies today can be traced their structure to Aristophanes? What is your current favorite comedy skit/show/movie/satiric writing? And how does it use the old comedy elements?

Write your answer in a 500 word reflection.

**Assignment 4**-Comparing Comic Hero to Tragic Hero

Draw/depict a comic hero and a tragic hero and label with quotes and commentary on how they fit their type of hero.