

Warren High School

English IV AP and AP/Dual: 2018 Summer Reading

Welcome to English IV AP and English IV AP/Dual Credit. Your focus of study this year will be the universal experiences and questions of mankind. We will explore these experiences and questions through a rich variety of texts that span cultures and periods of time. To prepare you for this study, please complete the following:

❖ **Read *Mythology: Timeless Tales of Gods and Heroes* by Edith Hamilton**

Mythology is a collection of the most important myths that are regarded as the foundation of Western literature. It is organized in seven parts:

1. The Gods, the Creation, and the Earliest Heroes
2. Stories of Love and Adventure
3. The Great Heroes Before the Trojan War
4. The Heroes of the Trojan War
5. The Great Families of Mythology
6. The Less Important Myths
7. The Mythology of the Norsemen

Many of these myths are the sources for allusions and archetypal patterns we will encounter in our further readings, so it is important that you read them and understand their cultural influence.

❖ **Assignment Instructions:** For each of the seven parts of *Mythology*, decide on a relevant thematic focus that you can support by referencing the detailed stories from that part. For example, you may decide that you want to focus on a theme about love for Part Two: Stories of Love and Adventure.

For each of the seven parts, write one thematic statement. Then, keep a running list of quotations or paraphrases from that section that you would use to further your ideas about that theme in a more developed assignment, such as a timed essay. **These theme statements and accompanying notes will be due by Tuesday, September 4.**

❖ **Teachers' Tips:**

- You will submit your assignment via Google Classroom, so get started on your note-taking in a Google Doc that you can edit as you go.
- Remember that **theme is a statement about the universal human condition**. Theme is not a single word, like love, but instead the message you think the work conveys about love. For ideas on thematic topics that are relevant to the stories in *Mythology*, see the list on the back of this page.

- Your supporting quotes and notes should be substantial, but purposeful. So, don't record anything and everything—select the examples and phrases that are most meaningful to your thinking about the topic you are focusing on within that section of the book.

Thematic Topics*:

Alienation - emotional isolation; inability to relate with others; separation from one's own self
Betrayal - fading bonds of love; intentional deceit; hidden motives
Birth - life after loss; life sustains tragedy; cycles of birth and death
Coming of Age - boy becomes a man; girl becomes woman; loss of innocence; gaining of worldly knowledge
Death - death as mystery; death as a new beginning; death as redemption
Deception - appearance versus reality; nature of truth and knowledge
Discovery - conquering unknown; discovering strength; revealing hidden truth
Duty - the ethics of killing for duty; man's duty to self; man's duty to family, country, work, or society
Family - destruction of family; familial dysfunctions/cycles; protection of family; familial bonds
Fortune - a fall from grace and fortune; fleeting nature of fortune; predestined fate
God and Man - inner struggle of faith; affirmation of faith; man's relationship with God or a greater power
Good and Evil - the coexistence of good and evil on earth
Heroism - false heroism; cultural heroism; conflicting values between man and culture
Home - security of a homestead; home as a concept versus a place
Hope - hope returns; hope as a renewing or motivating force
Hopelessness - losing hope after tragedy; man's loss of purpose or belief in the world/God
Isolation - the isolation of the human soul; the alienation of an individual
Journey - most journeys lead back to home; journey as a revelation of the self; journey as a sacrifice for others
Judgment - balance between justice and judgment; social norms versus moral judgment
Loss - loss of innocence; loss of individualism; loss of love; loss of hope; loss of man; loss of society
Love - love sustains all; love fades in the face of challenge; relationship between love and time; the power of love
Peace and War - war as a universal, tragic experience; peace as a fleeting existence; peace/war in the modern world
Power - lust for power; corruptive nature of power; man's desire for power
Suffering - suffering as a natural human experience; suffering as redemption
Survival - man against nature; man against society; man against self; nature of man without civilization

*This is a list of just some thematic ideas. There are many other topics you might consider once you begin reading the stories in *Mythology*. Pick a topic you understand and can articulate well.

**Remember, your assignment calls for a thematic statement—not just this topic. To generate your thematic statement, ask yourself: *what idea/message are these stories suggesting about* _____?
topic