

Summer Reading for 2018-19, AP English Literature: *Crime and Punishment*

*****PLEASE NOTE: If you are not scheduled for the AP Literature course, please click on the 12th-Grade assignment for English III, which is on *The Stranger*.*****

AP Literature: *Crime & Punishment* Summer Assignment (annotations, followed by a quotation journal)

[A source citation from Dr. Slayton: Below I've recycled Dr. Lehman's framing remarks and annotation guidelines while presenting my own set of seven questions that relate to your quotation journal. After six years of advising the Honor Council, I'd hate to begin the year with a plagiarism accusation . . .]

Guidelines: As I'm sure you've heard from the legions of AP Literature students who've come before you, your task in preparation for AP Literature next year is to read Dostoevsky's *Crime & Punishment*. I'll be perfectly honest here. It's dense and complicated. It's dark and tortured. It's long and challenging. It's also by turns fascinating and frustrating, thrilling and maddening. If you're not interested in engaging with the complex psychological, social, philosophical, religious, and emotional ideas that the novel presents, then this course isn't for you.

Please **purchase this edition of the text**, available through Amazon.com (ISBN: 978-0-679-73450-5):

http://www.amazon.com/Punishment-Vintage-Classics-Fyodor-Dostoevsky-ebook/dp/B008QLVMTI/ref=sr_1_3?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1432227913&sr=1-3&keywords=crime+%26+punishment

Your assignment is two-fold: (A) Annotations (B) Quotation Journal

(A) First, **ANNOTATE** the novel thoroughly. **You'll need to annotate the entire novel—including the Epilogue—by the first day of school.** Here are guidelines for annotating well:

*(1) On the whole, quality is more important than quantity; **thorough annotations averaging every five pages will help you engage with and process the novel more meaningfully than scribbling single words on every page.** Do not stress about writing something down on every page; by the same token, one annotation every twenty pages—even a detailed, paragraph-length note—won't help you connect parts of the book together as thoroughly as you need to.*

*(2) Think in terms of **questions**; as a reader, you're in conversation with the text. It's a two-way street. Humans create art for other people (while hermit-like artists are working for themselves, true, even they are expressing themselves outwardly, into the world), and so art is a conversation. To that end, when something strange, confusing, or thrilling happens in the novel, ask a question about it. You may be able to answer your question later.*

*(3) Think also in terms of **making connections** across the text. When asked his advice about what novelists need to do to be great, the superb British novelist E.M. Forester wrote: "Connect, connect, connect." His answer is a bit of a pun: he means that an author must connect with his audience. But he also means to connect every aspect of the novel together: in great art, nothing is meaningless. To that end, try to link ideas—character changes, image and symbol patterns, plot movements—with your annotations. Novels are spider webs of ideas and feelings. Draw the web. When you note something (a symbol, an image, a character trait) on page five, see if you can re-describe it on page 100 if and when it reappears.*

(4) Avoid writing down single literary terms like "symbol," "theme," or "characterization." Talk about the book—not around it. Those terms don't really help you make any sense of anything unless you comment more deeply about them. Don't just notice things: try to explain or describe them.

(5) Personal comments ("Cool!" "Weird!" "I don't get this!") won't really help you. Avoid them. While I don't want to blunt your authentic enthusiasm—or valuable skepticism—about the book, those comments don't enrich or explain the novel at all. If you're compelled to write such comments, follow them up with legitimate questions or comments about characterization, voice, symbolism, setting, plot, structure, theme, etc.

(B) Second, from the passages you've annotated, choose *TEN* quotations that seem significant after you have had some time to reflect on your reading. These quotations will form the basis of a **a quotation journal in which you grapple with the characters and concepts of the text**. You're responsible for submitting **TEN (10) QUOTED PASSAGES WITH FOLLOW-UP ANALYSIS**. Of those quotation explanations, **SEVEN (7)** need to address the sets of questions you see below, and we'll use these moments and your thoughts about them to shape our opening lessons on the book. The remaining three quotation explanations are your choice: you can explore or explain any moment from the text that you find meaningful, compelling, or frustrating. **These journals will be due during the first few weeks of school in August at some date before Labor Day.**

TO RECAP:

- 10 quoted passages with follow-up analysis
- 7 of the 10 must respond to the one of the 7 sets of questions below (with all 7 eventually covered)
- 3 of the passages you select and analyze are your choice

Select passages from each section of the novel, *including the epilogue*. Focus *SEVEN* of your journal entries on responding to the seven sets of questions listed below (one journal entry per question):

1. Consider the episode with Marmeladov that appears early in the novel. Originally conceived as a separate story, it was instead included in the opening chapters. Why do you think Dostoevsky included Marmeladov? How does the comparison between Marmeladov and Raskolnikov serve to bring Raskolnikov's character into sharper focus?
2. How does Porfiry Petrovich handle Raskolnikov? What combination of standard interrogatory tactics and unusual psychological probings does Porfiry deploy? What motivates him to treat Raskolnikov as he does?
3. How are Sonya and Dunya similar? Why does Raskolnikov find Dunya's plan to marry Luzhin so repugnant, so close to prostituting herself, yet is not repulsed by Sonya's prostitution, and, in fact, treats her as an equal to his mother and sister?
4. To you, which character comes across as more *villainous*—*Luzhin* or *Svidrigalov*? Why? In addressing this question, consider both (a) our conventional moral standards for judging people (b) our more intuitive, visceral, gut-level responses to people.
5. Focus on a character who serves as a *foil for Raskolnikov*—a character who shares similar traits, a similar background, or similar circumstances with Raskolnikov, but who has a different attitude or philosophy and makes different choices. Select passages that reveal the contrast in their characters.
6. Why did Dostoevsky find it necessary to add an *Epilogue*? Some readers feel that the Epilogue unnecessarily prolongs a long novel that has already achieved climax and closure. Not only, they contend, is the Epilogue anti-climactic; its summary mode of presentation clashes with the real-time, scene-by-scene quality of the novel up to that point. How does Raskolnikov change in the course of the Epilogue? What do we learn about him here that goes beyond what we've learned before? Whereas the rest of the novel takes place over roughly two weeks, why is it critical for Dostoevsky to have the Epilogue play out over a long period of time?
7. One of the striking features of Dostoevsky's thinking was his emphasis on *irrationality*. So often, he contended, we behave in ways that make no rational sense and often end up being counter-productive, if not downright *self-destructive*. Selecting a passage that displays a character or characters thinking and behaving irrationally (and perhaps self-destructively), speculate as to what "hidden" motivations might be guiding him/her/them at such moments. (A particularly relevant episode might be Raskolnikov's motivations and actions before and/or during and/or after his murder of the lady pawnbroker.)

YOUR JOURNAL'S FORMAT: (the "quote sandwich")

When you write about literature using support from the text in the form of quotations, you should always *set the context of the quotation by explaining who is speaking and describing the situation*. Then *write the quotation itself*-- or enough of it to make its meaning clear—and document it appropriately with the page number in parentheses. *Follow the quotation by explaining its significance*. As you analyze, *branch out in as many directions as possible*; for example, consider what the quotation reveals about the *character(s)* involved, the novel's broader *themes*, and any other literary *devices or techniques* (setting? structure? symbolism? prose style? narrative point of view?) the author employs.