

Honors English II Litblog

One of the best ways to improve writing is to write. During the course of this year, you will be asked to write a lot. You will write essays, poetry, some creative writing, a research paper, and business letters. In addition, you will write very regularly in your litblog. A blog is a place where people express their opinions. A litblog is a place where you'll express your thoughts and opinions about the reading you're doing.

On both block days and Friday, you will have homework reading in a literary text. Friday night's reading will **not** require a blog entry, but for each of the block day's reading, you'll need to write and turn in a litblog entry in the google classroom that includes the following information:

1. A header including the date, the title of the work you're reading and the page numbers or act-scene numbers from the night's reading.
2. A 200-400 word reflection paragraph that can raise personal questions, foretell what will happen next, express feelings regarding what's happening in the text, analyze a particular quotation that you think is powerful or interesting, etc. See google classroom for a list of reflection questions if you don't understand the difference between reflection and summary. You will not get points if you just summarize the reading. You will also not get points if it's under 200 words. (Check with a word count tool if you're unsure.)

Each night's litblog should be turned in the night it is due. A normal week, then, will have two posts (one by Tuesday or Wednesday night and the other by Thursday or Friday night). Each post is worth 30 points, so you have 60 points per week for litblogs. 10 points will be deducted if you post both entries together at the end of the week.

Example Litblog (300 words):

Header: 8/24 Macbeth Act V scene 1

Reflection: In Lady Macbeth's midnight wanderings, we see the tortured workings of a guilty subconscious mind. I love the quotation, "Out, damned spot! Out, I say! One: two: why, then 'tis time to do't. Hell is murky. Fie, my lord, fie! A soldier, and afeard? What need we fear who knows it... Yet who would have thought the old man to have had so much blood in him?" This quotation is important because it shows both Lady Macbeth's arrogance that she is above the law as a ruler, and her discomfort with what she has done. Even though she argues with herself that she is a ruler and can do anything she wants, the spots of blood still won't come out. The smell of blood is still present. Another Renaissance writer, Macchiavelli, thought that rulers should have a different set of morals than everyone else because they have bigger responsibilities. In other words, it might be right for a ruler to kill someone if it would lead to the peace of the state, and yet I think this work of Shakespeare shows that he disagreed with Macchiavelli. The conscience will still bother even a king or queen when they do something wrong. When I think of my own life, when I know I've done something wrong, it can haunt me. I'm not sure if it's the subconscious mind or the conscience or just some God-given prompting to know what is right and what is wrong. In any case, Lady Macbeth is not really fooling anyone. The doctor in the scene realizes that her ailment is mental, not physical. The only thing he can do is appeal to God for help. I predict that the Macbeths will get their just desserts by the end of the play.

Due Dates, etc.:

- Students will turn in an entry for each night's reading on the day it is due. The teacher grades the week's two entries every Saturday morning and will have the grade in AERIES by the end of the day on Monday or earlier. Each week's set of litblog entries is worth 60 points, 30 pts. per entry. No late litblogs will be accepted except in the case of illness. In that case, the student must email the instructor to arrange an extension.

- **Important! Litblogs are not group projects.** Students must copy and paste their entire litblog to a Word file at the end of each semester and submit to turnitin.com to check for plagiarism. For this reason, I would suggest having just one googledoc where you write your litblogs. Just add the latest one to the top each

time, but cut and paste it out to submit to the google classroom for each due date. That way, you'll have all your entries in one google doc that is easy to download as a pdf and submit to turnitin. Any litblog copying will result in 0's on the entire semester's litblog and a referral for cheating.

- **WARNING:** Don't blow off the litblog! Missing one or two entries won't kill you, but it adds up over the semester and is an integral part of the course, both for your grade and for your learning of the material.