Personal Enrichment/Classics Project Hum 8

**The Assignment**

**Purpose**: to encourage students to engage with literature and consider how aspects of our world have been influenced by these writings. This is an opportunity for students to read a selection of their choice and to write personal reflections about the literature. The DSS English department has compiled a list of different significant classics –novels, plays-poems, religious texts-of Western Civilization for each grade level.

I encourage you to spend some time researching the different titles on the list. Look them up on the internet; ask your parents or siblings about them; find out what these selections are about and what each one’s reading difficulty and length are.

If you choose a longer selection and you cannot finish it by May, that is okay. I want you to read as much as you can to understand the “essence” of the literature. Most importantly, I want you to think about the themes presented in your selection. I will provide students with a theme reference sheet.

**The Assignment**

**(a)** You will keep a ***personal response journal*** while reading. Please see reverse for suggestions on what to write in your journal. This journal will be collected by me in **November, January, and March**. Then, you will submit your journal in **May** for a final assessment.

This journal will be marked for quality and **development** of ideas, especially in discussion of your personal connection to the reading. (Please refer to the rubric)

**NOTE:** you will not be given any marks for simply summarizing the plot. I am evaluating for deeper-level thinking here.

**(b)** You will participate in a *small group (4) discussion* in December; you will be expected to discuss character, setting, conflict, and (possibly) theme.

You will participate in a *class discussion* in June where you will discuss the ideas and themes in your books. You will be able to refer to your journal during the discussion

*Your participation in the June discussion is worth 5% of term 3.*

**Personal Response Journal – an explanation**

Things you could include in your journal:

* Your opinion about the characters. Do they remind you of people you know? What are their strengths/weaknesses? Are they static or dynamic characters? Are they similar to other literary characters? Are they similar to you? Predict what will happen to them later in the story.
* Discussion about the main conflict(s). Have you ever experienced this conflict? Can you think of another book, TV show, movies, art etc. which has this conflict? What does it remind you of?
* Discuss the themes that are present. What is the author’s opinion about those themes? Write some possible theme statements that represent the story/parts of the story. How are these themes present in our society too? Connect the themes in your book/poems/play to themes in other literary works, TV shows, movies, songs, etc. Do these themes connect to any part of your life?
* Symbolism, motifs, irony, foreshadowing, and other literary techniques the author uses.
* Personal opinions of the literature. What do you like about it? What do you dislike? What is your opinion of the author’s writing style? What confuses you?
* Quotes from the book/poems/play that stand out as being important/significant to you. Explain the significance.

**In your journals:**

* Write in first person (I)
* Relate thoughtful reactions which reveal your understanding
* Avoid summarizing plot details
* Be personal; express your views, opinions, ideas, and/or emotions
* Consider other viewpoints and perspectives in relation to your own
* Refer directly to the literature to **support** your views
* Aim to write at least 1 page per journal entry