

IBDP English Literature, Year 1 (English 3) Summer Reading

This year's summer reading will introduce you to Pittsburgh's very own Pulitzer Prize winning playwright August Wilson and will challenge you to think about issues affecting our city and nation today. Enjoy reading the play and the accompanying speech by August Wilson. Take good notes and reflect as you read. Your reader's journal will help you as will study Wilson and more of his works at the start of the school year. I look forward to meeting you in August, but please email me if you have any questions before then: rpatrickmutunga1@pghschools.org.

Stay safe and healthy,

Ms. Patrick Mutunga

Central Text: Radio Golf by August Wilson

You may check out a print copy of the text from your local library or access an online version here: <https://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&pid=sites&srcid=ZGVmYXVsdGRvbWFpbnxzZW5pb3JpbmF1aXJ5MTMxNHxneDozNmY2OTU4YmZjOWYzOGMx>.

The Assignment

Part 1: Pre-reading—Words of Wilson (10 points, Assessment category)

Select at least two of the following quotes from August Wilson and write a brief reflection on each in your notebook. (Consider these questions: What is the quote's meaning and significance to you? What does it make you think or wonder about August Wilson? Do you agree or disagree? Why?)

1. I write the black experience in America, and contained within that experience, because it is a human experience, are all the universalities.
2. I haven't read Ibsen, Shaw, Shakespeare - except 'The Merchant of Venice' in ninth grade. I'm not familiar with 'Death of a Salesman.' I haven't read Tennessee Williams.
3. Blacks have traditionally had to operate in a situation where whites have set themselves up as the custodians of the black experience.
4. I don't write particularly to effect social change. I believe writing can do that, but that's not why I write.

Part 2: Reading and Journaling (50 points, Assessment category)

As you read the play, keep a reader's journal capturing your notes, reflections, responses, and wonderings about what you are reading in each scene. Your reader's journal must be hand-written. Label each section with the act and scene number and from there go for independent and creative thought about your reading. For each scene, you should have

- (1) list-form notes on important plot developments, characterization, uses of literary devices, or other


observations and

(2) a paragraph or so reflecting on something important in that scene (your impression of a character; connections between what you’re reading and something in your life/community/our city/our country; thoughts on the themes Wilson is developing; your thoughts on Wilson’s writing style; etc.)

Here are a few ideas for your chapter notes and reflections:

Significant quotes that represent important themes, characters, ideas, aspects of the writer’s style, etc.

- Notes about characters and character development
- Notes on important symbols, recurring images, or motifs
- Questions you have about anything you’ve been reading
- Definitions of important or unfamiliar words
- Connections between your life experience and culture and what you’re reading
- Connections to current events or history

Reading Journal Rubric 					
	EXCELLENT 100 pts	GOOD 85 pts	EMERGING 75 pts	STRUGGLING 65 pts	NO RESPONSE 0 pts
Critical thinking	<p>EXCELLENT</p> <p>Ideas and opinions are always clearly stated and supported with evidence from the text. The student asks pertinent questions, makes comparisons and consistently draws logical conclusions.</p>	<p>GOOD</p> <p>Ideas and opinions are usually clearly stated and supported with evidence from the text. Some evidence that the student is questioning the text and making comparisons between texts.</p>	<p>EMERGING</p> <p>When stated, ideas and opinions are rarely supported with evidence from the text. Many entries are simply summaries of texts read with little attempt to make comparisons or draw conclusions.</p>	<p>STRUGGLING</p> <p>The student merely summarises the text. Little or no evidence of comparisons and connections between texts or logical conclusions.</p>	<p>NO RESPONSE</p> <p>Either no relevant response to the text provided OR no evidence of close reading of the text or of critical thinking on any level.</p>
Insight and reflection	<p>EXCELLENT</p> <p>Information about the text is accurate and response shows penetrating insight. Ideas and opinions show originality. Connections with student’s own life/culture are made consistently.</p>	<p>GOOD</p> <p>Information about the text is accurate. The student shows evidence of deeper thinking and originality, and responds personally to the text by expressing his/her own feelings and reactions.</p>	<p>EMERGING</p> <p>Information provided about the text is generally accurate but insight is only occasionally offered. The student rarely expresses his/her own feelings and reactions to the text.</p>	<p>STRUGGLING</p> <p>Information about the text may be missing or inaccurate. No insight is shared, or insights and opinions tend to be dull, predictable or unoriginal.</p>	<p>NO RESPONSE</p> <p>Either no response provided OR no evidence of insight or personal reflection.</p>
Quantity	<p>EXCELLENT</p> <p>Response entries have been made to every chapter assigned. Chapter notes have a variety of notes and journal entries, showing a development of ideas.</p>	<p>GOOD</p> <p>Response entries have been made for most of the key chapters studied.</p>	<p>EMERGING</p> <p>There are some gaps in the journal. Some chapters have not been discussed or writing is unfinished.</p>	<p>STRUGGLING</p> <p>Only a few of the assigned chapters have been discussed.</p>	<p>NO RESPONSE</p> <p>No journal.</p>

Need more ideas or prompts for your journaling? Check out the “Independent Reading Journal Prompts” resource attached to this assignment.

Part 3: August Wilson’s Role in American Theater (50 points, Assessment category)

1. Read August Wilson's speech "The Ground on Which I Stand." (Online text: <https://www.americantheatre.org/2016/06/20/the-ground-on-which-i-stand/>). As you read, use these strategies to help you engage with this challenging text: pause every few paragraphs to summarize what you've read; look up any words or references to people, places, etc. that you don't know; go back and re-read if you find yourself losing track of Wilson's argument. The link in the background description box will take you to some helpful background information on this speech.

2. Reflect on these questions in your notebook after reading this speech:

1. What is Wilson's central argument about African American theater?
2. This speech shocked Wilson's audience and ignited months of debate after Wilson delivered it.
3. Why do you think this speech was so shocking and controversial? Use specific details from the speech to support your thinking.
4. In what ways is August Wilson's speech relevant to us today?
5. Select at least two significant thoughts from Wilson's speech. Reflect on why they are so important.
6. How does this speech connect to August Wilson's play Radio Golf?

3. Return to the two quotes you reflected on for the pre-reading portion of this assignment. Now that you have read one of Wilson's plays and a defining speech from his career, how has your thinking on each of these quotes changed? (Questions to consider: Has the quote taken on a new meaning for you? Do you understand something more about August Wilson's writing and his career? Do you understand the quote on a deeper level?)

Part 4: In-class Literary Analysis Essay (100 points, Writing category)

Be prepared to write an in-class essay analyzing significant literary aspects of Wilson's Radio Golf, such as characterization, theme development, setting, symbolism, or writing style. You will receive the prompts on the designated in-class essay dates and will have two days of class time to complete your essay. Take good notes in your reader's journal; you'll be able to use them for your essay!

Parts 1, 2, and 3 of this assignment are due by Friday, September 3, 2021.

Questions? Email Ms. Patrick Mutunga at rpatrickmutunga1@pghschools.org.

Independent Reading Journal Prompts

Following is a list of journal prompts. Use whatever helps you to arrive at good, interesting reflections. You do NOT have to use any of these if you so choose. Remember, your journal entries should be your reflections, connecting your novel to universal ideas, current events, history, yourself, etc. Also, pay attention to the writer's craft. Have fun!

Remember to label the act and scene numbers for each entry in your reader's journal.

- o Describe the problem/conflict of this book. How is this conflict affecting various characters in the play?
- o Who is your favorite or least favorite character? Why?
- o Do any of the characters remind you of yourself, a family member, or a friend? How?
- o Are there situations in the story where you would have acted differently than one of the characters? Describe what you would have done.
- o Compare and contrast two characters. Include at least three important similarities and three important differences.
- o Describe the setting (time and place). Does it remind you of anywhere you are familiar with?
- o Describe the climax (the turning point of the story when the action reaches a critical point). Why is this moment so important?
- o What do you like best about the story? The least? Why?
- o Does this story remind you of other books you have read, movies you have seen, or experiences you have had? Describe the similarities.
- o Write a letter to a friend recommending this book.
- o If you could ask the author one question, what would it be? Why do you want to know this?
- o Why do you think the author wrote this selection?
- o What did the author do in order to “hook” the reader? Explain.
- o What “pictures” does the author create in your mind? Draw and describe them.
- o Have you learned anything interesting that you didn’t know before reading this selection? Explain.
- o Are the characters believable? Why or why not?
- o Write a letter to one of the characters giving him/her advice on how to handle a problem or situation he/she is facing. Be sure to include a greeting and a closing.
- o If you could spend one day with a character, who would it be and what would you do? Explain why you chose these activities for this particular character.
- o How has the main character changed over the course of the story? What do you think is the cause of the change?
- o What was the best part of this book? Explain.
- o Are there any parts you would change? Explain.
- o How did you feel while reading this book? Why did you feel this way?
- o Pretend you are a character in the story. Write a diary entry as the character, explaining what has happened to you and how you feel about it.

o Using the text, illustrate a descriptive passage, a key scene, or a character (this should take some time and effort . . . no stick figures!). Describe the picture.

More possibilities:

- I liked the way that the writer...
- I didn't like...because...
- This novel makes me realize...
- The most important thing about this novel is...
- If I were (name of character), I would (wouldn't) have
- What happened in the novel was very realistic (unrealistic) because...
- I agree (disagree) with the writer about ...
- I think the title is a good (strange/misleading) choice because....
- A better title for this book would be...because....
- In my opinion, the most important word (sentence/paragraph) in this novel is...because...
- If I could talk to (name of character), I would say...
- The novel is similar to (different from) other novels I have read because...
- The novel is similar to (different from) other novels by this writer because ...

Summary/Scores:

Part 1: Pre-reading ____/10

Part 2: Reader's Journal ____/50

Part 3: Wilson's Role ____/50

Part 4: In-class essay ____/100