The CAS Summer Reading Component

A summer reading component is required for all CAS students entering grades 9 through 12 who are enrolled in CAS English classes for the upcoming school year.

Listed below are the required books for each CAS English class.

Grade 9  
*The Wave* by Todd Strasser or Morton Rhue  *The House on Mango Street* by Sandra Cisneros

Grade 10  
*Out of this Furnace* by Thomas Ball  *Old Man and the Sea* by Ernest Hemingway

Grade 11  
*Anthem* by Ayn Rand  *Native Son* by Richard Wright  *Dinner at the Homesick Restaurant* by Anne Tyler

Grade 12  
*The Bride Price* by Buchi Emecheta  *Gulliver's Travels* by Jonathon Swift  *Picture of Dorian Gray* by Oscar Wilde  *Cyrano de Bergerac* by Edmond Rostand

In an effort to make sure that all students have access to these books, the following procedures are in effect.

Each student may:

• Purchase the novels at a local bookstore.
• Borrow the novels from a local library.
• Current 9th, 10th, and 11th graders may sign novels out for the summer from their current CAS English teachers. These novels should be returned in the fall. Failure to do so will require the student to pay for the missing novels.
• Current 8th graders may contact the CAS facilitator of the high school they are planning to attend and may sign out novels during the first two weeks of June. The school phone numbers are listed below:

  - Allderdice High School 412-422-4800  Brashear High School 412-571-7300
  - CAPA High School 412-338-6100  Carrick High School 412-885-7700
  - Perry Traditional Academy 412-323-3400  University Prep High School 412-622-5900
  - Westinghouse High School 412-665-3940  Obama High School 412-622-5980

Listed below are the student reading guides that accompany the novels listed above. These guides were developed by CAS English teachers to help students focus on important issues, themes, symbols and central topics of the novel as they read throughout the summer. No required written component is required for students to complete during the summer. Rather, each teacher will have an in-class evaluation around the required summer novels when school resumes in the fall.

The Student Reading Guides follow.
Student Reading Guides for:

The Wave

The House on Mango Street
The novel, *The House on Mango Street*, written by Sandra Cisneros (1954 - ) is a collection of loosely related vignettes narrated by Esperanza Cordero, a seventh grader, living a challenging life in her new home on Mango Street. It is a book of short stories, not even full stories, but character sketches and vignettes that contribute to the whole. Although it is narrated in the voice of a young girl, it has the richness of poetry and a completely convincing perspective because it is written by a mature and sophisticated writer.

As you read this novel, you should pay close attention to the central issues, themes, and situations noted below. These will prepare you for the discussion and written work in English 1 CAS.

**THEMES** are the fundamental and often universal ideas explored in a literary work. They are statements about life that the author is trying to get across in a piece of writing. In most cases, the theme will be implied rather than directly spelled out.

- Maturity
- Curiosity
- Isolation
- Discovery
- Friendship
- Neighborliness
- Values
- Ridicule
- Character
- Hope

**MOTIFS** are recurring structures, contrasts, or literary devises that can help to develop and inform the text’s major themes.

- Loss of family members
- Learning to compromise
- Coping with discontent
- Comprehending divisive community conflicts
- Defending the vulnerable
Literary Terms and Applications

For a better understanding of *The House on Mango Street*, review the following terms and applications.

**Vignette** - A vignette is a brief scene that presents a theme, character, or topic in a literary work, such as images of girls yearning for love or women who are disillusioned with marriage.

**Theme** - Theme is the statement about life that the author is trying to get across in a piece of writing. In most cases, the theme will be implied rather than directly spelled out.

**Motif** - A motif is the term for an often repeated idea in literature.

**Symbol** - A symbol is a concrete object that stands for a complex or abstract idea or relationship and implies more than the literal meaning of the word or words.

**Bildungsroman** - Bildungsroman is a “formation novel,” which describes the coming-of-age of an untried or naïve youth.
The novel, *The Wave*, written by Todd Strasser, was based on an actual incident that took place in a Palo Alto, California high school in 1969. It is the story of a teacher, Ben Ross, who has a creative approach to education. Mr. Ross comes up with a way that allows students to experience some aspects of what life was like in Nazi Germany. Without telling his students what he is doing, Ben Ross leads them into an experimental game in which the class reorganizes itself into a small fascist society. Interpretations of order, discipline, and community are introduced. The trappings of a cult are set. The experiment works too well. New members join; parents grow uneasy; relationships are disrupted. Students learn an unforgettable lesson about the weakness of human nature.

As you read the novel, you should pay close attention to each of the following. These will guide you through the novel as well as prepare you for the discussion and written work in English 1 CAS.

**HISTORICAL REFERENCES** are events, people, places or ideas in history that are directly related to the novel and its themes.

- Events in Nazi Germany
- Hitler
- The Holocaust
- Military dictatorship
- Brainwashing

**THEMES** are the fundamental and often universal ideas explored in a literary work. They are a statement about life that the author is trying to get across in a piece of writing. In most cases, the theme will be implied rather than directly spelled out.

- Individualism versus collectivism (community spirit vs. individualism)
- Working together as a group
- Bullying
- Freedoms we take for granted are necessary for society to function smoothly

**CHARACTERIZATION** is the creation of full-fledged human motivation, behavior, and response in fictional people.

Laurie’s growth from organizer of a school newspaper staff to leader of a media revolt suggests strength of character and promise of leadership in her future. By embracing David, she shows no intent to hold a grudge and quickly incorporates him into the controlled end of the Wave experiment. Be able to describe the personalities of each of the following characters:

- David Collins
- Laurie Saunders
- Amy Smith

**SIMILES** - The literary term, simile, is a comparison of two unlike things using “like” or “as.” In chapter fourteen, Laurie says, “…and everyone’s going along with The Wave like a flock of sheep.” Laurie is using a simile to compare people to sheep.
SYMBOL - A symbol is a concrete object that stands for a complex or abstract idea or relationship and implies more than the literal meaning of the word or words. The Wave, like the swastika, is a symbol that is full of movement, a fitting emblem for a movement that promised change and transformation.

The Wave also represents the Nazi party. Ben Ross represents Hitler. The beating of the boy symbolizes the persecution of the Jews. David’s attack on Laurie stands for an attack on free speech.

MEANINGS OF SLOGANS

Strength Through Discipline  Strength Through Community  Strength Through Action

WEB RESOURCES


EPISODE - An episode is a coherent event, digression, or incident in a story or serial that stands out on its own merit.

The introduction of the Wave in Mr. Ross’s history class is an episode. The harmless beginning with straight posture and attention to the front of the classroom seems beneficial rather than dangerous. As the students learn the first motto and practice standing at their places and replying with a crisp pronunciation, including proper tongue-tip articulation of the teacher’s name, the author introduces the authoritarianism required of Hitler’s Germany to subvert public support from normal goals to tyranny.
Grade 10 - English 2 CAS

Student Reading Guides for:

Out of This Furnace The Old Man and the Sea
Out of This Furnace

In 1941, Thomas Bell (Belejčak) wrote the poignant novel *Out of This Furnace*, which chronicled the challenges facing generations of eastern European immigrants as they settled in and worked in the steel mills of western Pennsylvania. The story is told from the perspective of three generations of Slovaks, and simply put, the reader learns of the terrible working and living conditions the immigrants in the early 1900s endured in the Monongahela River Valley.

The story is told in four parts; each part focuses on the specific character. The first section describes the passage from the “old country” to America, through the eyes of George Kracha. One sees how the steel workers are consumed by the brutally long and dangerous days of surviving in the mills. Themes of ethnic intimidation, steel company exploitations, and visions of optimism pervade the novel.

*Out of This Furnace* is valuable to read and analyze for at least three reasons:

1) For Pittsburghers, it provides an unusually accurate historical account of life and times in Pittsburgh at the turn of the 20th century.

2) It vividly answers the question, “What was it like on a day to day basis for Slovaks and other immigrants that worked in the factories?”

3) It exposes the horrific inhuman working conditions extant in the mills and the evolution of the steel unions, which established economic justice for the workers.

While *Out of This Furnace* is a novel of labor history, social conditions and politics, it is also a solid family tale—chronicling the growth and evolution of a family as it relates to immigration and work, a situation where life revolves around the reality of the steel mill.

As you read, you should pay close attention to the following areas of the novel, as a guide to your understanding and to help you prepare for the discussion and writing assignments in English 2 CAS.

**The Family as Archetype** – An archetype is a model or original pattern for something. In this novel, Kracha’s family can be seen as representative, or a model, of the entire ethnic/immigrant experience.

**The Steel Mills as Motif** – A motif is a theme or image that appears throughout a work of literature.

In this novel, the steel mills act as a motif for the ethnic/immigrant experience in the furnace of the American melting pot, with each character and each generation being changed by exposure to the mills. The steel mills are seen as a tool to forge hard, strong, finished steel from raw materials using intense heat and hard labor. Think about how that same process applies to the immigrant family in the novel, and how they are turned into a hard, strong, finished product.

**The Role of Women in the Novel** – Note how the lives of the women characters, in many cases, parallel the lives of the men in the mills. They, too, are sometimes crushed or broken by the hard life of the mill towns (as the men are crushed or broken by the mills); at other times, the women may feel liberated by the opportunities of the mill towns (just as the men sometimes see opportunities provided by the mills).
- In Part One, the narration is detached or separated from the main character, Kracha. The narrator relates a series of episodes involving Kracha and the other characters, episodes in which things happen to the characters. Kracha reacts more than he takes actions.

- Parts Two and Three show a narrator that uses the Third Person Omniscient to show more of what the characters, Mike and Mary, are thinking and feeling as well as doing. In these parts, you should notice how the characters are shown doing things more often than having things happen to them.

- By Part Four of the book the change in the narration is complete. Here you’ll see how the main character, Dobie, asserts himself as a major force for change. He also sees himself as in charge of his life rather than as being dependent on the mill. Dobie acts more than he reacts.

**Bildungsroman** – A bildungsroman is a novel that depicts the growth or development of the main character. It is a “coming-of-age” story. This usually involves a single character whose actions and growth are traced over a period of time. In Out of This Furnace you’ll notice that the bildungsroman concept is extended from one character to the experience of an entire people—the wave of immigrants who arrived to work in American’s steel mills. Be sure to pay attention to the way the immigrants as a whole “come of age” and undergo the maturing experience in this novel.

**Central Character or Hero** – Notice how there is really no central character in this novel. Each of the characters in the story embodies an aspect of the main character, the immigrants who came to America.

**Figurative Language** – The title of the book can be taken in two ways. In one sense, the family has, by Dobie’s time in Part Four, escaped life in the mills, so they are “out of the furnace.” In the same sense, they have been changed by their experience in the mills and are, as a result, stronger because they have been forged, like the steel that comes “out of the furnace.”
Written in 1952, Ernest Hemingway’s novel was first published in an issue of Life magazine in the fall of that year. It was later published with strong advance sales and critical acclaim. It is a brief story --- some call it a novella --- but it is full and rich in its content. It is the story of Santiago, a wise, old, and apparently failed fisherman, who endures great loss and suffering to achieve his own kind of victory in the end. It is also a story of companionship, love, heroism, faith, and respect.

As you read, you should pay close attention to the following areas of the novel, as a guide to your understanding and to help you prepare for the discussion and writing assignments in English 2 CAS.

THEMES are the fundamental and often universal ideas explored in a literary work. They are a statement about life that the author is trying to get across in a piece of writing. In most cases the theme will be implied rather than directly spelled out.

**Christianity:**
Santiago is a Christ-like figure, who must struggle in a test of his faith and his mission.

**Man vs. Nature**
Nature, in the form of the ocean, is seen as both a source of healing and redemption for men, as well as a source of cruelty and defeat.

Santiago sees himself as being one with the creatures in nature and with the sea itself.

The nobility of nature is frequently emphasized.

Although Santiago may often be seen as in a struggle against nature, he is, more accurately, in a struggle to find his place within nature.

Man can prove himself in this struggle not by avoiding the inevitability of destruction or death, but by transcending it.

**The Hero**
Santiago is, in the end, a heroic figure who refuses to accept the idea of defeat.

Society views him, however, as a laughable failure, for they cannot understand the heroic code that Santiago lives by.

Santiago’s heroic code is embodied in his dedication to his life’s work and his refusal to lose faith.

If Santiago has a flaw as a tragic hero, it is pride. But in his case, his pride leads to failure --the sharks destroy the marlin -- and to triumph -- he wins the battle against all those who doubted him.

For Hemingway, the hero is someone who is less concerned with victory than with fighting the good fight. Santiago says in the novel: “A man can be destroyed but not defeated.”
Unity
In the novel, apparently contradictory elements are shown as being unified in a whole existence. The sea is kind and cruel. The sharks are noble but cruel. Santiago’s life means an acceptance of success and failure. Man must see himself as a strong individual and as a part of nature.

Manhood
The ideal of manhood in the novel is a man who can behave with honor and dignity in spite of the tragedies of life. Santiago shows us how to live life in a way that befits a man.

Success
There is a contrast of types of success in the novel. Santiago is clearly a failure in terms of outer, material success. He is regarded as a failure as a fisherman. His success comes in the form of inner, spiritual success. Santiago may lose everything by the end of the novel, but he has, nonetheless, succeeded.

SYMBOLS are objects, characters, figures, or colors used to represent abstract ideas or concepts.

The Lions
Santiago constantly dreams of lions, symbols of great and noble strength.

The Sharks
The sharks symbolize the inevitability of defeat (death) in life’s struggle.

Religious Symbols
Santiago is a Christ-like figure of redemption, with a young disciple (Manolin). There is constant reference in the novel to the importance of faith. Santiago also undergoes a three-day test of his faith, has a “hand (deeply) creased with scars,” carries his mast as a kind of cross, and, when he finally reaches his cabin, falls and sleeps “face down on the newspapers with his arms straight and the palms of his hands up.”

The Marlin
The great fish symbolizes the often elusive goal for Santiago, the real challenge of his life and his faith in himself.

The Elements of Fiction

Narrative Point of View
The narration is third person, at times objective and at times omniscient – providing insights and details of Santiago’s inner thoughts and dreams.

Tone
The tone varies from a matter-of-fact approach to the story to a reverential feeling for Santiago’s struggle.

Setting
The story is set in the late 1940’s in a small fishing village near Havana, Cuba, and in the nearby waters of the Gulf of Mexico.

Protagonist
The protagonist is an old fisherman, Santiago.
Major Conflict
The major conflict is the three-day struggle Santiago undergoes in his quest to land the great fish.

Plot
The novel carefully, almost systematically, follows the structure of introduction, rising action, climax, falling action, and denouement.
Student Reading guides for:

Anthem Native Son Dinner at the Homesick Restaurant
Ayn Rand (1905-1982) was born in Russia and educated under the Communists, experiencing firsthand the horrors of totalitarianism. *Anthem*, written in 1937, is Ayn Rand's novelette about the essence of collectivism. *Anthem* is not just a story about the individual being swallowed by the collective. It is also an identification of how that can happen, what ideas people must first accept before such a totalitarian society can take hold. *Anthem* is not merely a story about the horrible, depressing life of people in a collectivist society; it is also about the triumph of the individual's independent spirit, the triumph of those who reject the ethics of collectivism.

*Anthem* contains many elements that appeal strongly to young readers. It is an exciting and inspiring story, with heroic characters risking their lives for their ideals. It has mystery, carrying students into a science-fiction world of the future. It portrays events with grand significance, challenging readers to decide not just what will happen to particular characters, but what the world should be like.

*Anthem* raises ethical and political issues at a time in the lives of young people when such issues are beginning to take on critical importance: Who am I? Is it possible to stand on my own? The book asks basic question about society: If we could choose what kind of society to have, what should we choose? What is the moral and just society? Does my life belong to the group? Do I have the right to pursue my own happiness? Can a society without freedom be productive?

As you read the novel, you should pay close attention to each of the following. These will guide you through the novel as well as prepare you for the discussion and written work in English 3 CAS.

**THEMES**

The fundamental and often universal ideas explored in a literary work. They are statements about life that the author is trying to get across in a piece of writing. In most cases, the theme will be implied rather than directly spelled out.

**Utopias and Anti-Utopias:** This type of fiction is often called "anti-utopian," meaning that the world presented is the world as it should not be. Rand held that economic progress depends upon freedom, that the un-coerced mind is the source of technology, prosperity, and progress. Thus the collectivist society she depicts is stagnant and primitive.

**Philosophic Meaning:** Philosophic issues arise throughout the story, but they are dramatized in action—in the hero’s struggle against his society; they do not appear as philosophical speeches.

**Individualism vs. Collectivism:** The principal political issue in *Anthem*—and in society at large—is the issue of individualism vs. collectivism. The society depicted in *Anthem* is a collectivist society. "Collectivism," Ayn Rand wrote, "means the subjugation of the individual to the group—whether to a race, class, or state does not matter." In such a society, the individual is owned by the group; he has no right to a private existence, which means no right to lead his own life, pursue his own happiness, or use his own property. The individual exists only as part of the group, and his worth is determined by his service to the group.

The alternative to collectivism is individualism, the view advocated by Ayn Rand. "Individualism," she wrote, "regards man—every man—as an independent, sovereign entity who possesses an inalienable right to his Selflessness: *Anthem* dramatizes Ayn Rand's view that the self is destroyed in a collectivist society. How is the lack of self—or selflessness—shown? No one has a personal name, for, under collectivism, individuals are interchangeable. Self-assertion is forbidden. All decisions are made by the Council in the
name of the whole. Individuals have no rights. No individual choice is allowed by the government: "everything which is not permitted by law is forbidden." *Anthem* depicts what happens to a society that implements selflessness.
**Egoism:** If lacking an ego means that one has become a robot, what, for Ayn Rand, is the exact meaning of egoism? Egoism means “concern with one’s own interests.” It means that oneself, rather than others, is the proper beneficiary of one’s action. Equality 7-2521 is egoistic.

**Free Will:** One of the oldest and most important philosophic issues is the problem of free will vs. determinism. Those like Ayn Rand, who advocate free will, contend that people can make choices, can make up their own mind, can make decisions, can direct their own lives by the ideas and values they adopt.

**SYMBOLS** are objects, characters, figures, or colors used to represent abstract ideas or concepts.

- **Candles** represent past and ignorance.
- **Electricity** directly equates to the ideas of future and progress.
- **Light** represents knowledge.
- **Prometheus** is the hero of the story; the bringer of light.
- **Gaea** is the earth mother who will bring forth a new race.
- **The Forest** can be compared to the ideas associated with the Garden of Eden; paradise.
- **Equality 7-2521** is an ironic symbol of inequality.
- **International 4-8818** is the loyal friend.
- **The scholars** are those who are most ignorant.
Dinner at the Homesick Restaurant

Dinner at the Homesick Restaurant, Anne Tyler’s ninth novel written in 1983, is the chronology of the life of the Tull family beginning in the 1920’s through the 1970’s. It is a realistic novel that portrays relationships in a family deserted by a father and raised by a strong, if somewhat frightened and angry, mother named Pearl.

Beginning with Pearl Tull at 85 and now dying, the reader is introduced to the Tull family. Using multiple and alternating points of view, the characters present their story. Pearl, at times the abusive mother, struggles to raise her three children after her husband abandons her. Cody, the oldest son who is frustrated by his past, allows rage to dominate his life. Erza, the youngest son and favorite of his mother, owns the Homesick Restaurant, Jenny, the daughter, strives not to repeat the same mistakes of her mother. The children, Cody, Ezra, and Jenny each have a totally different relationship with Pearl. Cody is strikingly handsome, but jealous of Ezra; Jenny is a determined young woman who tends to act before she thinks; and Ezra, the nurturing owner of the Homesick Restaurant, struggles with his family members for unity.

As you read the novel, you should pay close attention to each of the following. These will guide you through the novel as well as prepare you for the discussion and written work in English 3 CAS.

THEMES are the fundamental and often universal ideas explored in a literary work. They are statements about life that the author is trying to get across in a piece of writing. In most cases, the theme will be implied rather than directly spelled out.

Alienation and Loneliness are two related themes that permeate the novel, particularly in the character of Pearl who at times seems alienated from her family, but more alienated from her community. Pay close attention to how alienation and loneliness appear in other characters and other points of view.

Homesickness as a theme has a double meaning in this novel. The characters in this novel are both “homesick” and “sick of home.” Members of the family are constantly pulled together towards each other at the restaurant while attempting to flee the memories of their past and one another.

POINT OF VIEW: Each family member relates his/her story. Think about whether one character is more believable than other characters. Think about how Tyler weaves her story through each point of view? Pay particular attention to the archery incident, and how each character views it differently.
**Diction** is a writer’s choice of words.

**Syntax** is a writer’s arrangement of words.

**Figurative Language** is language that makes use of figurative devices such as simile, metaphor, hyperbole, etc.
Richard Wright’s novel *Native Son* explores the depth of a character that is difficult to hate, despite his heinous crimes. Bigger Thomas has dreams and hopes but lacks ambition. *Native Son* is a novel with serious messages and a heavy tone and should be read with both of these facts in mind. You should look for the following themes, motifs and symbols in the novel and should be able to identify incidents pertinent to them. You should pay particular attention to how tone is determined in this novel and also look at diction and syntax.

**TONE** is the attitude a writer takes toward the subject or the reader of a work of literature. **DICTION** is a writer’s choice of words. **SYNTAX** is a writer’s arrangement of words **THEMES** are the fundamental and often universal ideas explored in a literary work. They are statements about life that the author is trying to get across in a piece of writing. In most cases, the theme will be implied rather than directly spelled out. Look for:

- **Racism** and its effect on both the oppressor and the oppressed. The hypocrisy of justice and the terrible inequality of the American criminal justice system undermined by racial prejudice.

**Communism and radical political ideas** are depicted as a positive, supportive movement. **Determinism and freedom** come from within a person, not from social change. **MOTIFS** are recurring structures, contrasts, or literary devises that can help to develop and inform the text’s major themes. Look for: **Religion** and the role it plays in individual lives. **Popular culture** as conveyed through films, magazines, and newspapers is a major force in American racism.

**SYMBOLS** are objects, characters, figures, or colors used to represent abstract ideas or concepts. Examples are:

- **Mrs. Dalton’s blindness** allows the vicious cycle of racism in American society to continue. The cross traditionally represents compassion and sacrifice for a greater good but a burning cross is associated with racism. **Snow** and its whiteness represents metaphorically that Bigger’s life has been controlled by white people.
GRADE 12 - English 4 CAS

Student Reading guides for:

The Bride Price
Gulliver’s Travels
The Picture of
Dorian Gray
Cyrano de Bergerac
Cyrano de Bergerac, Edmond Rostand’s masterpiece historical romance, was published and produced in 1897. The play is a romance filled with paradox. It is the story of a man committed to daring and romance who conceals his love while helping another man to woo his beloved. The year is 1640, and the poet and swordsman, Cyrano de Bergerac, finds himself in love with the beautiful and intellectual Roxane. Despite his brilliance and charisma, an extremely large nose plagues Cyrano. His nose causes him to think he is too ugly for Roxane and chooses not to divulge his feelings. This leads him on a course of action that includes helping the young nobleman Christian express his love for Roxane.

As you read the play, you should pay close attention to each of the following. These will guide you through the play as well as prepare you for the discussion and written work in English 4 CAS.

**THEMES** are the fundamental and often universal ideas explored in a literary work. They are statements about life that the author is trying to get across in a piece of writing. In most cases, the theme will be implied rather than directly spelled out.

**Values and Virtue**
Cyrano de Bergerac has many themes, but values and virtue are the most important. The character of Cyrano is the voice of integrity, bravery, and the all-important aspects of love. This includes the desire and need for love, its importance in one's life, and pursuit of love. The struggle that Cyrano must face is his honor and integrity towards Christian vs. his love for Roxane. He promised to keep his word. Cyrano is an exceptional man because his integrity and virtue lead him to a higher moral standing.

**Deception**
Cyrano’s desire for Roxane leads him to deception and lies under the guise of being honest and truthful to his friend Christian. The deceptive plan that he and Christian develop only causes Cyrano more pain and anguish.

**MOTIFS** are recurring structures, contrasts, or literary devises that can help to develop and inform the text’s major themes.

**Society**
Rostand believed that the French society of the late nineteenth century had forgotten all of its values and moral beliefs. His play criticizes this thought through the corrupted behaviors of Dr. Guiche and Lise.

**Fighting and War**
The first three acts allow the characters to be fighters, literally. With the war in the fourth act, the fighters become not only cadets and musketeers, but also soldiers.
SYMBOLS are objects, characters, figures, or colors used to represent abstract ideas or concepts.

**Cyrano's Nose**
His nose not only makes him ugly, but also ineffective in his quest for love. His nose is the barrier between him and love.
By the time Jonathan Swift published *Travels Into Several Remote Nations of the World*, or as it is more commonly known, *Gulliver’s Travels*, in 1726, he was an old man. The book became an immediate success, but Swift never received much profit from its popularity. The text is a classic satire that exposes the corruption and defects in England’s political, social, and economic institutions. The work describes four imaginary voyages of Lemuel Gulliver, a ship’s doctor. Swift does not express his views through Gulliver, but through the foreign societies and cultures that his narrator encounters. Swift disguises his allusions to the political and philosophical thought of his time, allowing the reader, not Gulliver, to discover them.

As you read the novel, you should pay close attention to each of the following literary devices. These devices will guide you through the novel as well as prepare you for the discussion and written work in English 4 CAS.

**THEMES** are the fundamental and often universal ideas explored in a literary work. They are statements about life that the author is trying to get across in a piece of writing. In most cases the theme will be implied rather than directly spelled out.

- **Might Versus Right.** The novel questions whether physical power or moral righteousness should be the governing factor in social life.
- **Individuality Versus Society.** Swift’s text explores the idea of utopia - an imaginary model of the ideal community. Like the children of Plato’s *Republic*, the Liliputians raise their offspring collectively, but with less than utopian results.
- **The Limits of Human Understanding.** The idea that humans are not meant to know everything and that all understanding has a natural limit is an important theme of the novel. Just as importantly, Swift emphasizes the importance of self-understanding.

**SYMBOLS** are objects, characters, figures, or colors used to represent abstract ideas or concepts.

- **The Lilliputians** represent humankind’s wildly excessive pride in its own puny existence.
- **The Brobdignagians** symbolize the private, personal, and physical side of human life when examined in great detail.
- **The Laputans** signify the folly of theoretical knowledge that has no relation to human life and no use in the actual world.
- **The Houyhnhnms** represent an ideal of rational existence, a life ruled by sense and moderation of which philosophers since Plato have dreamed.
- **England** stands for deficiency, specifically in the financial sense that matters most to Gulliver.
In the novel *The Bride Price* (1976), Buchi Emecheta tells the story of the clash between the traditional customs of a small village in Nigeria and the continuous influence of Africa’s European colonizers, as seen through the eyes of a young girl. The bride price is a fee that is traditionally paid by the prospective husband’s family for the prospective wife. The author uses this practice of bride price to represent, both literally and symbolically, women’s submission to men in African culture. *The Bride Price*, although fictional, is somewhat autobiographical. The book draws on the events that Emecheta witnessed growing up in Nigeria.

As you read the novel, you should pay close attention to each of the following literary devices. These will guide you through the novel as well as prepare you for the discussion and written work in English 4 CAS.

**THEMES** are the fundamental and often universal ideas explored in a literary work. They are statements about life that the author is trying to get across in a piece of writing. In most cases, the theme will be implied rather than directly spelled out.

- **Gender Roles**
  There are many incidents in this story concerning the gap between the privileges of men compared to those of women. In the author’s culture, if a boy wishes to go to school and his family can afford it, he will go. It is an exception for a girl to go to school. If she does attend, her education stops when she is married, usually around the age of fourteen.

- **Slavery and Oppression**
  Slavery is depicted straightforwardly in the character of Chike, who comes from an *oshu* family, a slave family. After the Europeans came to Nigeria, slavery became illegal. Although the freed slaves and their descendants were educated, earned high professional salaries, and even owned big European-style homes, they were never accepted into the village.

- **Defiance and Resistance**
  Defiance of the rigid rules of society rises slowly in this novel through the character of Akunna. It comes to her in small steps and bolts out of her in fits of fear or embarrassment.

**STYLE** is the writer’s characteristic way of writing. It is his or her choice of words, sentence structure, and use of imagery and figurative language.

- **Foreshadowing**
  Emecheta foreshadows many of the issues that she will eventually present in the body of the story.

- **Myths**
  *The Bride Price* is colored with stories of African mythology.

- **Metaphor**
  Emecheta uses extended metaphors in this story. One example of this is the conflict that Akunna and her brother feel, caught, as they were, between traditional culture and European customs.
The Picture of Dorian Gray is the only novel published by Oscar Wilde (1854 -1900). First published in the summer of 1890, it was then revised with a preface and six new chapters in 1891. Like much of his work and life, Wilde’s Gothic melodrama was controversial. It is the story of Dorian Gray, a young orphaned man who is heir to great fortune and is also the subject of an oil painting. He declares that he would give his soul if he were always to be young and the painting instead would grow old. This starts Dorian Gray and the reader on a path of evil and sin.

As you read the novel, you should pay close attention to each of the following literary devices used throughout the novel. Recognizing these devices will guide you through the novel as well as prepare you for the discussion and written work in English 4 CAS.

**THEMES** are the fundamental and often universal ideas explored in a literary work. They are statements about life that the author is trying to get across in a piece of writing. In most cases, the theme will be implied rather than directly spelled out.

- **The purpose of art** is a theme first identified in the preface of the novel. The preface serves as an explanation of Wilde’s philosophy of art, and that is to have no purpose.

- **The supremacy of youth and beauty** is another theme. Art serves no other function than to offer beauty. Throughout the novel, beauty reigns. In a society that so worships beauty, youth and physical attractiveness are valuable commodities.

- **The superficial nature of society** is shown through the value of how one looks. If one is handsome, then one’s heart does not have to be good.

**SYMBOLS** are objects, characters, figures, or colors used to represent abstract ideas or concepts.

- **The opium dens**, located in a remote and derelict section of London, represent the sordid state of Dorian’s mind.

- **James Vane** represents Dorian’s tortured conscience. James is the voice of responsibility for the crimes one has committed.

- **The yellow book** represents the profound and damaging influence that art can have over an individual and serves as a warning to those who would surrender themselves so completely to such an influence.