



AP English Literature & Composition  
Summer Assignment  
School Year 2019-2020

Brief description of the summer assignment:

Students should complete a personal narrative (college essay) draft of 350-500 words using one of the attached released Common Application prompts or an essay prompt from their top college choice.

Students should also read Kate Chopin's *The Awakening*. Students may also access the text with the following link: <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/160/160-h/160-h.htm> The book is also readily available at the local library or copies available for check out at the front desk of Fairfax High School. Students will then complete the attached seminar topics.

Objectives of the summer assignment:

The objectives of the AP English Literature summer assignment are

- 1.) to serve as a springboard for the personal narrative writing unit
- 2.) to build on students' readiness in foundational analytic reading skills

Resources/Materials necessary for the summer assignment:

Students need to obtain and read a copy of Kate Chopin's *The Awakening* (any printed version is fine).

Estimated length of time to complete:

10 hours

Grade:

The narrative draft will count as a 100 point assignment in the Homework/Classwork Grade category for the 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter. The seminar topics will be used for further discussion.

Due Date:

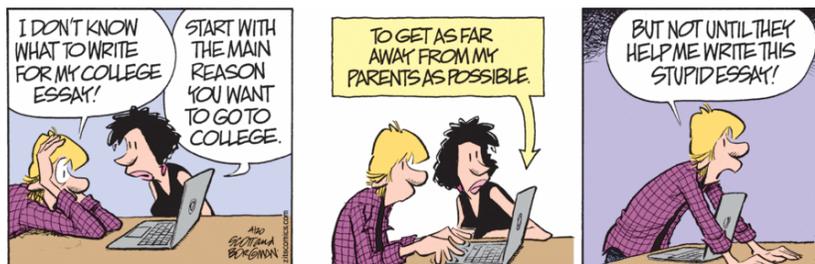
The narrative draft will be collected on the third class meeting. The seminar topics will be addressed on the fourth meeting of class.

Questions? Contact:

If you have questions, please send an email to Faye Smith at [afsmith@fcps.edu](mailto:afsmith@fcps.edu).

## 2018-2019 AP Literature & Composition Summer Assignment

Ms. Gebler [sagebler@fcps.edu](mailto:sagebler@fcps.edu) Ms. Smith [afsmith@fcps.edu](mailto:afsmith@fcps.edu) Ms. Spevak [csspevak@fcps.edu](mailto:csspevak@fcps.edu)



### I. College Essay/Personal Narrative

- a. Please complete a personal narrative between 350-500 words using one of the following released Common Application prompts for the 2018 college application process. Please research your top three choices for admission. If the schools do not accept the Common Application, please respond to an essay prompt from your top college choice.
- b. You will turn in the narrative on the third class meeting. You must follow MLA format as well as include the following:
  - i. Typed, Times New Roman, 12 Point Font, Double-spaced
  - ii. Selected prompt at top of page
  - iii. Total word count
- c. Read the following tips to aid in your creative process.
  - i. Choose a topic that reflects your individuality and creativity. This is a chance for you to talk directly to the college admissions committee. They want to know what makes you different from other applicants.
  - ii. Be concise. The college admissions committee is interested in your ability to communicate clearly and articulately.
  - iii. Let your unique voice speak; reveal yourself in your writing. Be natural and informal; avoid term-paper style introductory paragraphs.
  - iv. Do not start your essay with a question.
  - v. Do provide closure—a sense that you have come full circle.

### Common Application Prompts

1. Some students have a background, identity, interest, or talent that is so meaningful they believe their application would be incomplete without it. If this sounds like you, then please share your story.
2. The lessons we take from obstacles we encounter can be fundamental to later success. Recount a time when you faced a challenge, setback, or failure. How did it affect you, and what did you learn from the experience?
3. Reflect on a time when you questioned or challenged a belief or idea. What prompted your thinking? What was the outcome?
4. Describe a problem you've solved or a problem you'd like to solve. It can be an intellectual challenge, a research query, an ethical dilemma - anything that is of personal importance, no matter the scale. Explain its significance to you and what steps you took or could be taken to identify a solution.
5. Discuss an accomplishment, event, or realization that sparked a period of personal growth and a new understanding of yourself or others.
6. Describe a topic, idea, or concept you find so engaging that it makes you lose all track of time. Why does it captivate you? What or who do you turn to when you want to learn more?
7. Share an essay on any topic of your choice. It can be one you've already written, one that responds to a different prompt, or one of your own design.

## II. Required Reading Assignment - *The Awakening* by Kate Chopin

Please obtain and read a copy of the novel. Plan to read actively, annotating as needed, through the entire text. There will be copies available at the front office for you to check out or you may visit the local library or access the text with the following link: <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/160/160-h/160-h.htm>  
Before you read the novel, peruse the following seminar topics. They will be the focus of our examination of this novel in September. Each of these prompts asks you to look at a particular aspect of the novel and determine how it develops meaning. As you read, take notes, annotate, or outline so that you are prepared to discuss these topics and provide specific textual support for your arguments. (Your notes, outlines, annotations will not be collected. However, you will be able to use them for future assessments..)

There will be a seminar based on these prompts on the sixth day of school that your class meets.

\*\*\*\*\*

### Seminar Topics (Open-ended prompts) – *The Awakening*

1. Listen to/read the lyrics of “I’m Just a Girl” by No Doubt. What parallels exist between Edna’s experiences within the novel and the speaker within the song? Use textual evidence from the song AND the novel to support your answer. (Google lyrics.)
2. “Whatever we may do or attempt, despite the embrace and transports of love, the hunger of the lips, we are always alone. I have fraggged you out into the night in the vain hope of a moment’s escape from the horrible solitude which overpowers me. But what is the use! I speak and you answer me, and still each of us is alone; side by side but alone.”  
  
In 1895, these words, from “Solitude” by Guy de Maupassant, which was translated for a St. Louis magazine by Chopin, expressed an urbane and melancholy wisdom that Kate Chopin found compelling. To a woman who had survived the illusions that friendship, romance, marriage, or even motherhood would provide lifelong companionship and identity, and who had come to recognize the existential solitude of all human beings, Maupassant’s declaration became kind of a credo. Discuss how this credo has shaped Chopin’s novel, *The Awakening*.
3. Chopin scholar Erin E. McDonald, PhD, states, “Past feminist examinations of Kate Chopin’s work have focused on the question of whether the heroine’s suicide in *The Awakening* was intended to signify rebellion or defeat, most commonly reaching the conclusion that the author intended to leave this point ambiguous.” Discuss the significance of Pontellier’s final act. Why was her suicide so necessary, or was it?
4. Edna Pontellier and Adele Ratignolle share several intimate conversations about Edna’s relationship with her children. Edna sums up her sense of duty to her children in this way: “I would give up the unessential; I would give up money, I would give life for my children; but I wouldn’t give myself.” What does she mean by this? What is the unessential? What is the essential? Connect this sentiment to a central theme.
5. “*The Awakening* was a scandalous book when it arrived from the turn-of-the-century presses with a heroine who found her husband dull, married life dreary and confining, and motherhood to be a bondage.” Is this an accurate summary of the novel? Explain.
6. Consider the significance that setting plays in this novel: the cottage at Grand Isle, the Pontellier estate in New Orleans, the Pigeon House, Madame Reisz’s apartment, the beach and ocean, Louisville, etc. How do these various setting locations reflect Edna’s metamorphosis?