

**AP English Language & Composition**  
***The Grapes of Wrath* by John Steinbeck**  
**3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter Independent Reading Assignment**

**You mean I have to read THAT BOOK?** Yes, as students of English Language and Composition, one develops an awareness and appreciation of literature; in this case, a classic American novel about an uncertain time...perhaps due to government policies, questionable financial practices, extreme public and private debt...hey, wait, that sounds like now...interesting!

You will read this novel **independently** over third quarter, paying careful attention to the author's style, organization, and figures of speech. You are responsible for identifying and understanding elements about the plot chapters as well as identifying and commenting on the stylistic choices made by the author throughout the book, but especially in the intercalary (non-fiction) chapters.

- **Due 2/13 (Hrs. 1,5) & 2/14 (Hr. 2): Chapters 1-10 (to page 156)**
- **Due 2/27 (Hrs. 1,5) & 2/28 (Hr. 2): Chapters 11-18 (to page 314)**
- **Due 3/13 (Hrs. 1,5) & 3/14 (Hr. 2): Chapters 19-23 (to page 451)**
- **Due 3/27 (Hrs. 1,5) & 3/28 (Hr. 2): Chapters 24 - end (to page 619)**

**Stylistic Prose Devices (5 devices per section)**

Prepare a list of *at least* five (5) different examples of style techniques for each section listed above. Define the term, cite the example from the text and provide a brief analysis of the purpose and how the author uses the technique effectively. Use your terms packet for ideas.

1. Technique/Term
2. Example with page citation
3. Analysis of Effect

**Reading Reactions (4 total: 1 per section)**

After you finish reading each of the four sections above, write a response/reaction to that section.

Do NOT write a plot summary. Naturally, you will include some plot, but focus on your reactions to what is happening to the characters as well as their personalities and motivations, etc. What are you thinking right now about what you have read? Make connections and interpretations. Pose questions. **A response is a written exploration of the reading; not a plot summary or merely your opinion of the book, but what it makes you think about and why.**

In general, I will be looking for comprehension (how well you have attempted to understand the text) and analysis/extension (what kind of connections did you make regarding this text?). *Usually*, the more you write, the better all of this is as more writing usually indicates more thinking...meaning as you write, you *eventually* find out *what* you think. A sample reading reaction is posted on the class website: <http://www.pwhsaplanguage.pbworks.com>

## **Discussion Participation**

It is expected that students will have read the assigned section of the book before the day that it is due and will be active and willing participants in discussion on those days, just as they would in a college course.

**What if I do this wrong?** The only way you can be really “wrong” is to a) not do this at all (i.e., not be prepared for discussion days on the book) and b) write anything that you did not support with textual references. There are, however, some things you definitely should not do:

1. Fall behind on the reading. We will have discussions on the days that the reading is due. Your participation in these discussions is critical and will be assessed for credit.
2. Decide not to write or read at all because you don't like the book.
3. Write plot summary. Your teacher has read the book. Many, many times. She does not need you to tell her what happens. Your job is analysis, not summary.
4. Use Spark notes or other sources for short cuts or rent the movie. Your teacher looks at those sites regularly and has seen the film enough times to know exactly how it differs from the book. Such resources are to *enhance* your personal reading experience...not act as a substitute.
5. Copy, plagiarize, and borrow in any way from anyone or anything for any reason in your reading reactions or anywhere else in the class for that matter. If you choose to do so, we will then have a meeting in which we discuss what we call a “career ending decision” on your part. Do your own work.

**What if I still really don't like the book?** Then you must still really read it and justify why you don't think it is so great. It is your job as a reader to find interest in a text; it is not the book's job to interest you...

**Due 2/13 (Hrs. 1&5) or 2/14 (Hr. 2) : Chapters 1-10 (to page 156) BRING TO CLASS:**

- ✓ **Reading Reaction**
- ✓ **5+ Terms (with definition and analysis of effect)**
- ✓ **Discussion credit in class**

**Due 2/27 (Hrs. 1&5) or 2/28 (Hr.2): Chapters 11-18 (to page 314) BRING TO CLASS:**

- ✓ **Reading Reaction**
- ✓ **5+ Terms (with definition and analysis of effect)**
- ✓ **Discussion credit in class**

**Due 3/13 (Hrs. 1&5) or 3/14 (Hr.2): Chapters 19-23 (to page 451) BRING TO CLASS:**

- ✓ **Reading Reaction**
- ✓ **5+ Terms (with definition and analysis of effect)**
- ✓ **Discussion credit in class**

**Due 3/27(Hrs. 1&5) or 3/28 (Hr. 2): Chapters 24 - end (to page 619) BRING TO CLASS:**

- ✓ **Reading Reaction**
- ✓ **5+ Terms (with definition and analysis of effect)**
- ✓ **Discussion credit in class**

John Steinbeck. *The Grapes of Wrath* is a novel published in 1939 and written by John Steinbeck, who was awarded the Pulitzer Prize in 1940 and the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1962. Set during the Great Depression, the novel focuses on a poor family of sharecroppers, the Joads, driven from their Oklahoma home by drought, economic hardship, and changes in the agriculture industry. In a nearly hopeless situation, partly because they were trapped in the Dust Bowl, they set out for California along with thousands of other "Okies" in search of land, jobs and dignity. When preparing to write the novel JOHN STEINBECK. *The Grapes of Wrath*. With an Introduction by Robert DeMott. Although Steinbeck could not have predicted this success (and was nearly ruined by the notoriety it achieved), the fact is that, in the past half century, *The Grapes of Wrath* has sold more than 14 million copies. Many of them end up in the hands of students at schools and colleges where the novel is taught in literature and history classes at every level from junior high to doctoral seminars.