Annotation

One purpose of AP Literature is to acquire the skills necessary to analyze a variety of literary genres ranging from novels to poetry. Your summer reading is Steinbeck’s *The Grapes of Wrath*. You will be expected to purchase a hard copy of the novel – electronic versions will not be allowed. An important part of close reading is carefully annotating so that you are building an understanding of the literary techniques that are being used to construct the author’s purpose. Therefore, I am expecting that you annotate the novel while reading it. Specifically you will be looking for and identifying themes, motifs, symbols and biblical allusions. I will be checking annotations on the first day of class, so please bring your book with you. Annotations should include highlighted text, margin notes, post-it markers and brief chapter summaries.

Biblical Allusions and Imagery

Steinbeck uses biblical allusions and imagery throughout the novel to help convey the meaning of the novel. Through annotation, identify where you see biblical references and draw connections to how Steinbeck uses them to help support his themes. During the first week you will be evaluated on how well you have identified and connected these allusions and images to the novel’s themes.

Setting

The Grapes of Wrath is set during the 1930’s during the Dust Bowl Era. The setting is of this novel is important to your understanding of the plot. Go online and do some research on the Dust Bowl Era, The Great Depression, the relevance of Route 66, and the plight of tenant farmers and field workers during this time period. Without some research into the setting, you will be at a serious disadvantage in understanding the significance of the work. You will be assessed on your background knowledge of the setting for this novel.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cNuskt7Q_y8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cNuskt7Q_y8) offers a link to Ken Burns’ documentary on the Dust Bowl.

Dorothea Lange’s photographic depiction of the Dust Bowl Era and the plight of the migrant workers is a valuable source for understanding the era.

Structure

Steinbeck uses intercalary chapters to provide the reader with a wider understanding of the scope of the problems facing his characters. Pay attention and make notations on the changing point of view and tone in these chapters and be prepared to analyze how these chapter help Steinbeck build his themes and convey his purpose in writing this novel.

Packet

In order to help you prepare for the analysis, both written and through discussion, that will be taking place when the class begins, thoroughly fill out the packet that is linked to the summer reading assignment. This packet will be turned in on the first day of class.

Vocabulary

Create index cards (one per term) with the term on one side and the definition on the other. Familiarize yourself with these terms because you will be assessed on them and they will be used in discussing and analyzing the literature that you encounter in the class.