

Assignment A

Romeo and Juliet

Summer Reading Assignment Renaissance English C Strand

After reading the play *Romeo and Juliet* by William Shakespeare, you will choose two characters—one major, one minor—and create a mask for each of them. Each mask must be representative of the character and display the personality traits that directly affect the character's fate. While you are reading, take notes on the different characters, how they act, and what finally happens to them. This information will help you with the creation of the masks.

The Mask Criteria:

- Display the personality of the character it is representing
- Represent the fate or outcome of the character
- Wearable
- Show creativity
- Brief oral presentation

Some materials you may use, in case you are having a moment of doubt:

Cardboard	sequins	ribbon
Felt	glitter	paint
Fabric scraps	stickers	hardware supplies
Construction paper	feathers	fishing supplies
Tin foil	macaroni	the sky is the limit, in other words
Tissue paper	pictures	

I would suggest reading this play with a group of your friends because plays are meant to be heard, not read silently. Choose roles, act some of it out—the more you throw yourself into it, the more you will get out of it.

The mask will be due the first day you have English. Be prepared to speak about one of your masks, and wear comfortable shoes as we may do some Renaissance dancing as well. There will be a quiz over this play on one of the first days of school—be prepared.

Assignment B

Voltaire and Irving Stone
Summer Reading Assignment
Renaissance English C Strand

Read and annotate the Voltaire excerpt. Write your response to the piece, along with three questions you have about the work. Then turn your attention to *The Agony and the Ecstasy* by Irving Stone.

You should not have trouble finding the novel at any bookstore, but don't wait until the last minute. As you read the book, keep a dialectical journal. Plan to turn it in on the first day of English class. Use regulation notebook paper or a spiral notebook, and write only on the front of the page. Do not type your notes because I want you to write as you read. I suggest that you read a chapter, stop and write down your marked quotations, and then respond to them. If you read the novel first then try to go back and hunt passages, the effort required will double. Expect a test over the novel on the second day of class.

My expectations for the dialectical journal are simple: write personal responses to quotations you pull from the text. Responding personally means that you are to interact personally with each passage selected and tie it to the book in some way. Choose passages that relate to the Concept of The Human Condition including obsession, social position, guilt, ambition etc.

Start each entry with the book you are taking the passage from. You will have two columns on the page. First writing the quotation (and page number in a parenthetical citation) in the left hand column, then adding your commentary in the right hand column.

From Book I:

“I can't believe it. Look, everyone, Michelangelo has won!” (25)	your commentary
“Thank you for returning my drawings. I hope they have been helpful” (59)	your commentary
“Perhaps” (62).	your commentary

If you own your own book, you will probably want to mark the quotation on the page, too, so that it will be easy to find later. It may take a few chapters before you get the characters straight, but if you persevere, you will soon find yourself engaged. Read the entire book; you will enjoy it. If you do not read it, you will feel very left out when we discuss it because those who **do** read the whole thing get excited when talking about it. You might even have one of your parents read it along with you for discussion purposes and to help you get through the first part.

VOLTAIRE: OF THE PRINCIPLE OF ACTION

Everything is in motion, everything acts and reacts, in nature.

Our sun turns on its axis with a rapidity that astonishes us; other suns turn with the same speed, while countless swarms of planets revolve round them in their orbits, and the blood circulates more than twenty times an hour in the lowliest of our animals.

A straw that is borne on the wind tends naturally towards the centre of the earth, just as the earth gravitates towards the sun, and the sun towards the earth. The sea owes to the same laws its eternal ebb and flow. In virtue of the same laws the vapours which form our atmosphere rise continually from the earth, and fall again in dew, rain, hail, snow, and thunder.

Everything, even death, is active. Corpses are decomposed, transformed into plants, and nourish the living, which in their turn are the food of others. What is the principle of this universal activity?

This principle must be unique. The unvarying uniformity of the laws which control the march of the heavenly bodies, the movements of our globe, every species and genus of animal, plant, and mineral, indicates that there is one mover. If there were two, they would either differ, or be opposed to each other, or like each other. If they were different, there would be no harmony; if opposed, things would destroy each other; if like, it would be as if there were only one—a twofold employment.

I am encouraged in this belief that there can be but one principle, one single mover, when I observe the constant and uniform laws of the whole of nature.

The same gravitation reaches every globe, and causes them to tend towards each other in direct proportion, not to their surfaces, which might be the effect of an impelling fluid, but to their masses.

The square of the revolution of every planet is as the cube of its distance from the sun (which proves, one may note, what Plato had somehow divined, that the world is the work of the eternal geometrician).

The rays of light are reflected and refracted from end to end of the universe. All the truths of mathematics must be the same on the star Sirius as in our little home.

If I glance at the animal world, I find that all quadrupeds, and all wingless bipeds, reproduce their kind by the same process of copulation, and all the females are viviparous.

All female birds lay eggs.

In each species there is the same manner of reproduction and feeding.

Each species of plants has the same basic qualities.

Assuredly the oak and the nut have come to no agreement to be born and to grow in the same way, any more than Mars and Saturn have come to an understanding to observe the same laws. There is, therefore, a single, universal, and powerful intelligence, acting always by invariable laws.

No one doubts that an armillary sphere, landscapes, drawings of animals, or models in coloured wax, are the work of clever artists. Is it possible for the copyists to be intelligent and the originals not? This seems to me the strongest demonstration; I do not see how it can be assailed.

Assignment C

Action Book of Choice
Summer Reading Assignment
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After reading your “action hero” book, you get to write a poem, an “Action Hero Sonnet.”

The title of your sonnet is the character’s name.

An Elizabethan sonnet consists of three quatrains and a couplet. You might want to google those terms. Each line is made of ten syllables, not nine, not eleven, ten (10).

Oh, and it’s a rhyming poem, not free verse (again, go to google).

We note rhyme scheme by letters.

Contents of
each quatrain
(not necessarily in the order listed)

Rhyme scheme
of this sonnet

Setting
Time / place
Mood
Back story

1 A
2 B
3 A
4 B

Character
Traits
Motivation
Conflict

1 C
2 D
3 C
4 D

Minor
Characters
Foil / villain
Relationships

1 E
2 F
3 E
4 F

Resolution
Hero

1 G
2 G

HINT: Read the prologue of *Romeo and Juliet*. That is an Elizabethan sonnet that you can use as an example.