

# AP Literature Research Topics/ Ideas Long List

Assignment: The following list of abstract topics have been implied or expressed in the questions on various English (AP\*) Examinations since the middle 1980s. Students should read enough literature from each of the categories to be familiar with the topics and the authors who address these topics.

This list can be used as a basis for practicing the analysis or argument timed writing essay, for completing drafted writing, for pairing reading assignments, or for writing a complete research paper. Each Topic is followed by a specifically stated English (AP\*) Prompt to guide each specific assignment.

Students will get practice forming an individual stance using evidence from a list of short stories, Essays, speeches, non-fiction, and novels grouped by theme.

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### Accepting Death:

Choose works of literary merit that explore death in their writing. Then write a carefully nuanced research paper that examines the attitudes or traditions that affect how literature views death. Then, using these readings, develop conclusions about this complex subject.

- Bacon, Francis. "Of Death." *The Essays of Francis Bacon*. Ed. Clark Sutherland Northrup, Ph. D. Boston, Massachusetts: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1936. Pages 7-10.
- Bly, Carol. "The Dignity of Life." *The Best American Short Stories 1983*. Ed. Anne Tyler. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1992. Pages . found online**
- Carver, Raymond. "Errand." *The Best American Short Stories 1988*. Ed. Mark Helprin. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1988. Pages 132-144.
- \_\_\_ "A Small Good Thing." *Short Cuts*. New York: NY Simon and Schuster, 1997. Pages 1-26.
- Gillespie, Alfred. "Tonight at 9:36." *The Best American Short Stories 1971*. Ed. Stanley Ellie. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1971.
- Golding, William. *Lord of the Flies*.**
- Lopez, Barry H. *Of Wolves and Men*. New York: Charles Scribner and Sons, 1978.
- McCourt, Frank. *Angela's Ashes*. New York: Scribner, 1996.
- Mukherjee, Bharati. "The Management of Grief." *The Best American Short Stories 1989*. Ed. Stanley Elkin. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1989. Pages 150-166.
- Oates, Joyce Carol. "Nairobi." *The Best American Short Stories 1984*. Ed. John Updike. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1984. Pages 177-185.
- Ozick, Cynthia. "Rosa." *The Best American Short Stories 1984*. Ed. John Updike. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1984. Pages 184-223.
- Puller, Lewis B. *Fortunate Son*. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991.
- Sartre, Jean Paul. "The Wall." *World Literature*. New York: Doubleday, 1993. Pages 206-229.
- Stevenson, Adlai. "Farewell to a Friend." *American Short Speeches*. Ed. Bowen Aly. New York, NY: MacMillan Company, 1968. Pages 122-123.
- Shaw, G. B. "A Letter by George Bernard Shaw on the Death of his Mother." *The College Board Advanced Placement Examination*. 1981.
- Singer, Isaac Bashevis. "The Safe Deposit." *The Best American Short Stories 1980*. Ed. Stanley Elkin. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1980. Pages 312-324.
- Thoreau, Henry David. *Walden and Civil Disobedience*. New York: New American Library, 1980.
- Twain, Mark. *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*.**
- \_\_\_ "Letter From the Recording Angel." *The Complete Essays of Mark Twain*. Ed. Charles Neider. Garden City, NY: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1963. Pages 685-689.
- Updike, John. "Deaths of Distant Friends." *The Best American Short Stories 1983*. Ed. Anne Tyler. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1980. Pages 27-43.
- Wiesel, Eli. *Night*. New York: Bantam Books, 1960.**
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### Adapting to Change:

Some writers seem to advocate changes in social or political attitudes or in traditions. Choose works of literary merit that advocate some kind of change. Then write a carefully nuanced research paper that examines the attitudes or traditions that the writer wishes to modify. Then, using these readings develop conclusions about this complex subject.

Abbey, Edward. *Cactus Country*. New York: Time-Life Books, 1973.

Baldwin, James. *Collected Essays*.

Berry, Wendall. "Irish Journal." *Home Economics*. San Francisco, CA: North Point press, 1987. Pages 21-28.

Bush, Barbara. "Choices and Change." *Representative American Speeches 1990-1991*. Vol. 66.

Ed. Owen Peterson. NY: The HW Wilson Company, 1991. Pages 151-160.

Chopin, Kate. *The Awakening*.

Deloria, Vine. *American Indians, American Justice*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1983.

Dillard, Annie. *Teaching a Stone to Talk: Expeditions and Encounters*. New York: Harper and Row, 1982.

DuBois, W. E. B. *The Souls of Black Folk*. New York, NY: Dodd Mead Company, Inc., 1961.

Downs, Hugh. "The Post, It's Past and Future." *Perspectives*. Atlanta, GA: Turner Publishing, 1995. Pages 267-271.

Ellison, Ralph. *The Invisible Man*.

Emerson, Ralph Waldo. "Man the Reformer." *Essays and Lectures*. Ed. Joel Porte. New York, NY: Literary Classics of the United States of America, Inc., 1983. Pages 133-150.

\_\_\_ "The Method of Nature." *Essays and Lectures*. Ed. Joel Porte. New York, NY: Literary Classics of the United States of America, Inc., 1983. Pages 115-132.

\_\_\_ . "History." *Essays and Lectures*. Ed. Joel Porte. New York, NY: Literary Classics of the United States of America, Inc., 1983. Pages 237-256.

**Golding, William. *Lord of the Flies*.**

Hamlin, Garland. *A Son of a Middle Border*. New York, NY: The MacMillan Company, 1968.

King, Martin Luther. *Why We Can't Wait*.

Lewis, David. *W. E. B. DuBois: Biography of a Race*. New York: Henry, Holt, and Co., 1993.

Lopez, Barry H. *Of Wolves and Men*. New York: Charles Scribner and Sons, 1978.

Matthiessen, Peter. *The Snow Leopard*. New York: The Viking Press, 1978.

\_\_\_ *The Eastern Slope*. New York: The Viking Press, 1959.

\_\_\_ *Blue Meridian*. New York: Random House, Inc., 1970.

McCourt, Frank. *Angela's Ashes*. New York: Scribner, 1996.

Oates, Joyce Carol. "The Seasons." *Prize Stories 1985*. Ed. Williams Abrahams. Garden City, NY: Doubleday and Company, Inc. 1985.

**Orwell, George. *Nineteen Eighty-four*.**

Parkman, Francis. *The Oregon Trail*. Philadelphia: The John C. Winston Company, 1931.

Puller, Lewis B. *Fortunate Son*. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991.

Reno, Janet. "You Can Make a Difference." *Representative American Speeches 1996-1997*.

Eds. Calvin M. Logue and Jean DeHart. NY: The HW Wilson Company, 1997. Pages 1-7.

Steinbeck, John. *Travels With Charly*.

\_\_\_ *Grapes of Wrath*.

Thoreau, Henry David. *Walden and Civil Disobedience*. New York: New American Library, 1980.

**Twain, Mark.** *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*.

Toqueville, Alexis de. *Democracy in America*. New York, NY: Doubleday, 1969.

Voltaire. *Candide*.

Wharton, Edith. *Ethan Frome*.

Wills, Garry. *Certain Trumpets: The Call of Leaders*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1994.

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Alienation (Problems of Assimilation) because of Gender, Race, Class, or Creed:

Select works from a list of literary works in which a conflict exists because the will of the majority opposes the will of an individual. Then using these readings, develop conclusions about how these conflicts have moral and ethical implications for both the individual and society.

Andrews, Charles M. *The Colonial Background of the American Revolution*. South Braintree, MA: Alpine Press, 1977.

Baldwin, James. "Stranger in the Village." *The Oxford Book of Essays*. Ed. John Gross. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991. Pages 621-638.

Brown, John. "To Free the Slaves." *American Short Speeches*. Ed. Bowen Aly. New York, NY: MacMillan Company, 1968. Pages 22-27.

Cather, Wila. *My Antonia*.

**Chopin, Kate. *The Awakening*.**

Cleaver, Eldridge. "The Flashlight." *The Best American Short Stories 1983*. Ed. Anne Tyler. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1983. Pages

\_\_\_ "The Grave by the Handpost" (short story)

\_\_\_ "The Oxen" . . . "The Man He Killed" . . . "Ah, Are You Digging on My Grave" . . . "Hap" (Poems)

De Crevecoeur, J. Hector St John. *Letters from an American Farmer*.

Downs, Hugh. "Left-Handedness." *Perspectives*. Atlanta, GA: Turner Publishing, 1995. Pages 219-237.

DuBois, W. E. B. *The Souls of Black Folk*. New York, NY: Dodd Mead Company, Inc., 1961.

Ellison, Ralph. *The Invisible Man*.

Fraser, Antonia. *The Warrior Queens*. New York: Random House, Inc., 1988.

**Golding, William. *Lord of the Flies*.**

Gingrich, Newt. "Lessons on Race." *Representative American Speeches 1997-1998*. Eds.

Calvin M. Logue and Jean DeHart. NY: The HW Wilson Company, 1991. Pages 85-94.

Gore, Albert, Jr. "Remembering the Holocaust." *Representative American Speeches 1993-1994*.

Vol. 66. Ed. Owen Peterson. NY: The HW Wilson Company, 1991. Pages 82-87.

\_\_\_ "Understanding and Empathy." *Representative American Speeches 1997-1998*. Eds.

Calvin M. Logue and Jean DeHart. NY: The HW Wilson Company, 1991. Pages 95-102.

Greene, Graham. *The Power and the Glory*.

Hamilton, Alexander. *The Federalist Papers*.

Hamlin, Garland. *A Son of a Middle Border*. New York, NY: MacMillan, 1968.

**Hurston, Zora Neale. *Their Eyes Were Watching God*.**

Kennedy, Edward. "The Issue of Prejudice." *Representative American Speeches 1997-1998*.

Eds. Calvin M. Logue and Jean DeHart. NY: HW Wilson Company, 1998. Pages 47-55.

Kennedy, Robert. "A Tiny Ripple of Hope." *Twentieth Century Speeches*. Ed. Brian

McArthur. New York, NY: Penguin Book Company, 1992. Pages 366-373.

King, Martin Luther. *Why We Can't Wait*.

\_\_\_ "There Comes a Time When the People Get Tired." *Twentieth Century Speeches*. Ed.

Brian McArthur. New York, NY: Penguin Book Company, 1992. Pages 341-347.

Kogawa, Joy. *Obasan*.

Laurence, Margaret. *The Diviners*.

Lerner, Gerda. *The Majority Finds Its Past: Placing Women in History*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979.

Lewis, David. *W. E. B. DuBois: Biography of a Race*. New York: Henry, Holt, and Co., 1993.

Mandela, Nelson. "An Ideal For Which I am Prepared to Die." *Twentieth Century Speeches*. Ed. Brian McArthur. New York, NY: Penguin Book Company, 1992. Pages 341-347.

Mailer, Noran. *Armies of the Night*.

McCourt, Frank. *Angela's Ashes*. New York: Scribner, 1996.

McPhearson, James M. *Marching Towards Bethlehem*.

Momaday, N. Scott. *House Made of Dawn*.

Morrison, Toni. *The Bluest Eye*.

Oates, Joyce Carol. "First Views of the Enemy." *The Best American Short Stories 1973*. Ed. Martha Foley. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1973. Pages 259-270.

Okada, John. *No-No Boy*.

O'Connor, Flannery. *Wise Blood*.

Ozick, Cynthia. "The Dock Witch." *The Best American Short Stories 1972*. Ed. Martha Foley. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1972. Pages .

Parkman, Francis. *The Oregon Trail*. Philadelphia: The John C. Winston Company, 1931.

Reno, Janet. "Combating Discrimination." *Representative American Speeches 1997-1998*. Eds. Calvin M. Logue and Jean DeHart. NY: The HW Wilson Company, 1998. Pages 71-84.

Tan, Amy. *The Joy Luck Club*.

Thoreau, Henry David. *Walden and Civil Disobedience*. New York: New American Library, 1980.

Toqueville, Alexis de. *Democracy in America*. New York, NY: Doubleday and Company, 1969.

**Twain, Mark. *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*.**

— — — "Disgraceful Perscution of a Boy." *The Complete Essays of Mark Twain*. Ed. Charles Neider. Garden City, NY: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1963. Pages 7-10.

Valdez, Luis. *Zoot Suit*.

Vonnegut, Kurt, Jr. *Cat's Cradle (1963) and Slaughterhouse Five (1969)*

Welch, James. *Winter in the Blood*.

Woolf, Virginia. *A Room of One's Own*. New York, NY: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1929.

Wright, Richard. *Native Son*.

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### Conflict / Adversity / Courage:

Choose works from a list of works of literary merit in which the characters are forced to act courageously in times of adversity. Then, using these readings develop conclusions about the way these characters "can gather strength from distress and grow brave by reflection" even in cases where their actions may not be perceived by the public to be courageous at all.

#### **Beowulf**

- Arendt, Hannah. *On Violence*. San Diego, CA: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1970.
- Bertrand, Russell. "Religion and Science." *Writing About the World*. Vol. 1. Ed. Susan McCleod. Orlando, FL: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1991. Pages 96-104.
- Dillard, Annie. *Teaching a Stone to Talk: Expeditions and Encounters*. New York: Harper and Row, 1982.
- DuBois, W. E. B. *The Autobiography of W. E. B. DuBois*. International Publisher's Company, Inc., 1968.
- \_\_\_ *The Souls of Black Folk*. New York, NY: Dodd Mead Company, Inc., 1961.
- Churchill, Winston. *The Second World War*. Vol. 5. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1979.
- \_\_\_ *Triumph and Tragedy: The Second World War*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1981.
- Einstein, Albert. "Religion and Science." *Writing About the World*. Vol. 1. Ed. Susan McCleod. Orlando, FL: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1991. Pages 88-96.
- Emerson, Ralph Waldo. "Heroism." *Essays and Lectures*. Ed. Joel Porte. New York, NY: Literary Classics of the United States of America, Inc., 1983. Pages 369-382.
- Fraser, Antonia. *The Warrior Queens*. New York: Random House, Inc., 1988.
- Galbraith, John Kenneth. *Ambassador's Journal*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1969.
- Golding, William. *Lord of the Flies*.**
- Goodwin, Doris Kearns. *No Ordinary Time*. New York, NY: Simon and Schuster, 1994.
- Hamlin, Garland. *A Son of a Middle Border*. New York, NY: The MacMillan Company, 1968.
- Lewis, David. *W. E. B. DuBois: Biography of a Race*. New York: Henry, Holt, and Co., 1993.
- Matthiessen, Peter. *Blue Meridian*. New York: Random House, Inc., 1970.
- McCourt, Frank. *Angela's Ashes*. New York: Scribner, 1996.**
- McPhearson, James M. *Marching Towards Freedom*.
- Mead, Margaret. "The Energy Crisis." *Representative American Speeches 1973-1974*. Ed. Waldo W. Braden. NY: The HW Wilson Company, 1974. Pages 97-118.
- \_\_\_ "Warfare: An Invention, Not a Biological Necessity." *Writing About the World*. Vol. 1. Ed. Susan McCleod. Orlando, FL: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1991. Pages 126-138.
- Queen Elizabeth I of England. "Speech to Her Troops at Tilbury (1588)" *The College Board Advanced Placement Examination*. 1992. (maybe in the British Lit textbook)
- Rather, Dan. "Leadership in the Nineties." *Representative American Speeches*. Vol. 62. Ed. Owen Peterson. NY: The HW Wilson Company, 1991. Pages 56-64.
- Reagan, Ronald. "The Future Doesn't Belong to the Faint-Hearted." *Twentieth Century Speeches*. Ed. Brian McArthur. New York, NY: Penguin Book Company, 1992. Pages 448-456.
- Roosevelt, Franklin. "Message to Congress." *Representative American Speeches 1942-1943*. Ed. Owen Peterson. NY: The HW Wilson Company, 1991. Pages 56-64.

Stalin, Joseph. "Either We Don't or They Crush Us." *Twentieth Century Speeches*. Ed. Brian McArthur. New York, NY: Penguin Book Company, 1992. Pages 109-113.

Stratchey, Lytton. "Florence Nightingale." *The College Board Advanced Placement Examination*. 1993.

Thoreau, Henry David. *Walden and Civil Disobedience*. New York: New American Library, 1980.

**Tolkien, JRR. *The Fellowship of the Ring* series.**

Tuchman, Barbara. *The Guns of August*. New York, NY: MacMillan Company, 1962.

**Twain, Mark. *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*.**

Wills, Garry. *Certain Trumpets: The Call of Leaders*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1994.

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Dreams/Ambition/Worry/ Regret:

Select works from a list of literary works in which the characters' dreams/ambitions cause an attempt to recapture or reject the past. Then, using these readings develop some conclusions about how the feelings of reverence, bitterness, or longing affect the characters' ability to achieve these dreams.

Abbey, Edward. *Cactus Country*. New York: Time-Life Books, 1973.

**Anderson, Sherwood. "The Egg." *Short Story Masterpieces*. Ed. Robert Warren and Albert Erskine. New York, NY: Dell Publishing, 1980. Pages 15-30. or online at <http://www.ibiblio.org/eldritch/tales/egg.html>**

Baldwin, James. *Collected Essays : Notes of a Native Son / Nobody Knows My Name / The Fire Next Time / No Name in the Street / The Devil Finds Work / Other Essays*.

Chekhov, Anton. *Selected Short Stories*.

Dillard, Annie. *Teaching a Stone to Talk: Expeditions and Encounters*. New York: Harper and Row, 1982.

DuBois, W. E. B. *The Souls of Black Folk*. New York, NY: Dodd Mead Company, Inc., 1961.

**Fitzgerald, F. Scott. *The Great Gatsby*.**

— — — **"Winter Dreams." *Short Story Masterpieces*. Ed. Robert Warren and Albert Erskine. New York, NY: Dell Publishing, 1980. Pages 180-205.**

Fraser, Antonia. *The Warrior Queens*. New York: Random House, Inc., 1988.

Hamlin, Garland. *A Son of a Middle Border*. New York, NY: The MacMillan Company, 1968.

**Hemingway, Ernest. "Soldier's Home." *Short Story Masterpieces*. Ed. Robert Warren and Albert Erskine. New York, NY: Dell Publishing, 1980. Pages 207-217.**

Kennedy, Edward. "Now is the Time." *Twentieth Century Speeches*. Ed. Brian McArthur. New York, NY: Penguin Book Company, 1992. Pages 459-464.

Kennedy, John F. "The Torch has Been Passed to a New Generation of Americans." *Twentieth Century Speeches*. Ed. Brian McArthur. New York, NY: Penguin Book Company, 1992. Pages 300-304.

Lewis, David. *W. E. B. DuBois: Biography of a Race*. New York: Henry, Holt, and Co., 1993.

**Mason, Bobbi Ann. "Shiloh." *The Best American Short Stories 1981*. Ed. Hortense Calisher. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1981. Pages 171-184.**

Matthiessen, Peter. *Blue Meridian*. New York: Random House, Inc., 1970.

— — — *The Snow Leopard*. New York: The Viking Press, 1978.

— — — *The Eastern Slope*. New York: The Viking Press, 1959

**Miller, Arthur. *Death of a Salesman*.**

McPhearson, James M. *Marching Towards Freedom*.

**Orwell, George. 1984.**

Plato. "The Republic." *Writing About the World*. Vol. 1. Ed. Susan McCleod. Orlando, FL: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1991. Pages 260-268.

Puller, Lewis B. *Fortunate Son*. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991.

Reagan, Ronald. "A Time for Choosing." *Twentieth Century Speeches*. Ed. Brian McArthur. New York, NY: Penguin Book Company, 1992. Pages 352-356.

Thomas, Dylan. *Selected Essays*.

Thomas, Lewis. "The Unforgettable Fire." *Late Night Thoughts*. Ed. Thomas Lear. Canada: The Viking Press, 1983.

- Thoreau, Henry David. *Walden and Civil Disobedience*. New York: New American Library, 1980.
- Thucydides. "The Funeral Oration of Pericles." *The Book of Virtues*. Ed. William J. Bennett. New York, NY: Simon and Schuster, 1993. Pages 243-248.
- Washington, Booker T. *Up From Slavery*.
- Walker, Alice. "Nobody Was Suppose to Survive." *Living By the Word*. Ed. Vaughn Andrews. New York: Hartcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1988. Pages 153-163. or online at <http://www.mindfully.org/Reform/MOVE-Alice-Walker1988.htm>**
- "Trying to See My Sister." *Living By the Word*. Ed. Vaughn Andrews. New York: Hartcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1988. Pages 18-28.
- "The Universe Responds." *Living By the Word*. Ed. Vaughn Andrews. New York: Hartcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1988. Pages 185-185.
- Wills, Garry. *Certain Trumpets: The Call of Leaders*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1994.
- Woolf, Virginia. *A Room of One's Own*.
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### Family Relationships:

Some works depict a conflict between a parent and a child. Choose works of literary merit that explore this conflict. Then write a carefully nuanced research paper that examines the sources of the conflict and their thematic implications.

#### **Bronte, Emily. *Wuthering Heights*.**

Clinton, Hillary. "Our Global Family." *Representative American Speeches 1997-1998*. Eds. Calvin M. Logue and Jean DeHart. NY: The HW Wilson Company, 1998. Pages 71-84.

Galbraith, John K. "In Pursuit of the Simple Truth." *Representative American Speeches*.

Vol. 62. Ed. Owen Peterson. NY: The HW Wilson Company, 1991. Pages 56-64.

Hamlin, Garland. *A Son of a Middle Border*. New York, NY: The MacMillan

Company, 1968.

Lopez, Barry H. *Of Wolves and Men*. New York: Charles Scribner and Sons, 1978.

**Mason, Bobbi Ann. "Shiloh." *The Best American Short Stories 1981*. Ed. Hortense Calisher. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1981. Pages 171-184. (in our white textbook anthology)**

McCourt, Frank. *Angela's Ashes*. New York: Scribner, 1996.

McPhee, John. "Silk Parachute." *The Best American Essays 1998*. Ed. Robert Atwan.

New York, NY: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1998. Pages 176-178.

**Olsen, Tillie. "I Stand Here Ironing." *The College Board Advanced Placement Examination. 1992*. (in our white textbook anthology)**

Rodriguez, Richard. "My Mother is not surprised . . ."

The College Board Advanced Placement Examination. 1991.

Thoreau, Henry David. *Walden and Civil Disobedience*. New York: New American Library, 1980.

**Twain, Mark. *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*.**

**Shakespeare, William. *King Lear*.**

Walker, Alice. "Father." *Living By the Word*. Ed. Vaughn Andrews. New York:

Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1988. Pages 9-19.

Wolff, Tobias. "In the Garden of the North American Martyrs." *Prize Stories 1981*. Ed.

William Abrahams. New York: Double Day Dell Publishing Group, 1981. Pages.

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### Hopefulness:

An effective literary work does not merely stop or cease; it concludes. According to British novelist, Fay Weldon, "The writers . . . who get the best and most lasting response from readers are those who offer a happy ending through moral development--some kind of spiritual reassessment or moral reconciliation, even with self, even at death."

Abbey, Edward. *Cactus Country*. New York: Time-Life Books, 1973.

**Bronte, Emily. *Wuthering Heights*.**

**Carver, Raymond. "A Small, Good Thing."** Prize Stories 1983. Ed. William

Abrahams. New York: Double Day Dell Publishing Group, 1983. Pages 1-25.

Dillard, Annie. *Teaching a Stone to Talk: Expeditions and Encounters*.

New York: Harper and Row, 1982.

DuBois, W. E. B. *The Souls of Black Folk*. New York, NY: Dodd

Mead Company, Inc., 1961.

Emerson, Ralph Waldo. "The Transcendentalist." *Essays and Lectures*. Ed. Joel Porte.

New York, NY: Literary Classics of the United States of America, Inc., 1983.

Pages 191-209.

Faulkner, William. "I Decline to Accept the Decline of Man." Nobel prize acceptance speech

[http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel\\_prizes/literature/laureates/1949/ Faulkner-speech.html](http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/literature/laureates/1949/ Faulkner-speech.html)

Kennedy, Robert. "A Tiny Ripple of Hope." *Twentieth Century Speeches*. Ed. Brian

McArthur. New York: NY: Penguin Book Company, 1992. Pages 366-373.

McPhearson, James M. *Marching Towards Freedom*.

Puller, Lewis B. *Fortunate Son*. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991.

Thoreau, Henry David. *Walden and Civil Disobedience*.

**Twain, Mark. *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*.**

Updike, John. "The City." Prize Stories 1983. Ed. William Abrahams. New York: Double

Day Dell Publishing Group, 1983. Pages 141-156.

Wills, Garry. *Certain Trumpets: The Call of Leaders*. New York: Simon and

Schuster, 1994.

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Illusion / Woodenheadedness / Absurdity:

"Woodenheadedness, the source of self-deception, is a factor that plays a remarkably large role in government [and life in general]. It consists of assessing a situation in terms of preconceived fixed notions while ignoring or rejecting any contrary signs. It is acting according to wish while not allowing oneself to be deflected by the facts." Tuchman, Barbara. from *March of Folly*.

Arendt, Hannah. *On Violence*. San Diego, CA: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1970.

\_\_\_ The Life of the Mind. New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1978.

**Beckett, Samuel.** *Waiting for Godot*.

**Golding, William.** *Lord of the Flies*.

Lewis, David. *W. E. B. DuBois: Biography of a Race*. New York: Henry, Holt, and Co., 1993.

Thoreau, Henry David. *Walden and Civil Disobedience*.

**Twain, Mark.** *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*.

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## Independence:

- Dillard, Annie. *Pilgrim at Tinker Creek*. New York, NY: Harper and Row, 1974.
- \_\_\_ Teaching a Stone to Talk: Expeditions and Encounters. New York: Harper Row, 1982.
- DuBois, W. E. B. *The Souls of Black Folk*. New York, NY: Dodd Mead Company, Inc., 1961.
- Emerson, Ralph Waldo. "Self-Reliance." *Essays and Lectures*. Ed. Joel Porte.  
New York, NY: Literary Classics of the United States of America, Inc., 1983.  
Pages 257-282.
- Fraser, Antonia. *The Warrior Queens*. New York: Random House, Inc., 1988.
- Golding, William.** *Lord of the Flies*.
- Hamilton, Alexander .** *The Federalist Papers*.
- Jefferson, Thomas. "The Declaration of Independence." *Writing About the World*. Vol. 1. Ed.  
Susan McCleod. Orlando, FL: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1991. Pages 96-104.
- Lewis, David. *W. E. B. DuBois: Biography of a Race*. New York: Henry, Holt,  
and Co., 1993.
- McCourt, Frank. *Angela's Ashes*. New York: Scribner, 1996.
- McPhearson, James M. *Marching Towards Freedom*.
- Paine, Thomas.** *Common Sense*.
- Parkman, Francis. *The Oregon Trail*. Philadelphia: The John C. Winston Company, 1931.
- Puller, Lewis B. *Fortunate Son*. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991.
- Thoreau, Henry David. *Walden and Civil Disobedience*.
- Twain, Mark.** *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*.
- Wills, Garry. *Certain Trumpets: The Call of Leaders*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1994.
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Knowledge/Wisdom:

"For in much wisdom is much grief, and increase of knowledge is increase of sorrow." The first chapter of Ecclesiastics, the Bible.

Bacon, Francis. "Of Truth."

Berry, Wendall. "The Loss of the University." Irish Place.

Churchill, Winston. *The Second World War*. Vol. 5. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin, 1979.

Dillard, Annie. *Teaching a Stone to Talk: Expeditions and Encounters*. New York: Harper and Row, 1982.

Emerson, Ralph Waldo. "The Intellect." *Essays and Lectures*. Ed. Joel Porte. New York, NY:

Literary Classics of the United States of America, Inc., 1983. Pages 415-430.

**Golding, William.** *Lord of the Flies*.

Lewis, David. *W. E. B. DuBois: Biography of a Race*. New York: Henry, Holt, and Co., 1993.

Machiavelli Nicolo. *The Prince*.

McCourt, Frank. *Angela's Ashes*. New York: Scribner, 1996.

Puller, Lewis B. *Fortunate Son*. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991.

**Shakespeare, William.** *King Lear*.

Thoreau, Henry David. *Walden and Civil Disobedience*.

**Twain, Mark.** *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*.

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## Language as a Key to Identity

“It goes without saying, then, that language is also a political instrument, means, and proof of power. It is the most vivid and crucial key to identity: It reveals the private identity, and connects one with, or divorces one from, the larger, public, or communal identity. There have been, and are, times, and places, when to speak a certain language could be dangerous, even fatal. Or, one may speak the same language, but in such a way that one's antecedents are revealed, or (one's hopes) hidden. This is true in France, and is absolutely true in England: The range (and reign) of accents on that damp little island make England coherent for the English and totally incomprehensible for everyone else. To open your mouth in England is (if I may use Black English) to "Put your business in the street": You have confessed your parents, your youth, your school, your salary, your self-esteem, and also, your future." James Baldwin (1979)

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Love / Infidelity / Friendship / Distrust / Jealousy / Loneliness:

Love and infidelity, friendship and distrust, jealous and loneliness--these are the oxymorons that define the ambiguity of human experience. The eighteenth century British novelist Laurence Sterne wrote, "No body, but he who has felt it, can conceive what a plaguing thing it is to have a . . . mind torn asunder by two projects of equal strength, both obstinately pulling in a contrary direction at the same time."

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Money and Class in American/ Britain/Literature / The Nobleness of Work / Owning Property:

"I think it is fair to say that the current ardor of the American faith in money so easily surpasses the degrees of intensity achieved by other societies in other times and places. Money means so many things to unspiritual as well as temporal that we are at a loss to know how to hold its majesty at bay . . . ."

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**Emerson, Ralph Waldo.** "Manners." *Essays and Lectures*. Ed. Joel Porte. New York, NY: Literary Classics of the United States of America, Inc., 1983. Pages 822-829. online at [http://www.emersoncentral.com/manners\\_english.htm](http://www.emersoncentral.com/manners_english.htm)

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**Wilde, Oscar.** *The Importance of Being Earnest*.

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## Nature:

Many science and nature writers describe important encounters they have had with unfamiliar aspects of nature. Their changing responses to these observations develop a philosophy of respect for nature. For instance, Ralph Waldo Emerson developed this philosophy: "A life in harmony with nature, the love of truth and virtue, will purge the eyes to understanding her text."

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- \_\_\_ *The Eastern Slope*. New York: The Viking Press, 1959.
- McPhee, John. *The Control of Nature*. New York: Collins Publishers, 1989.
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- McPhee, John. "Ice Pond." *Table of Contents*. Ed. Fred Morcellino. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1985. Pages 192-203.
- \_\_\_ "A Textbook for Bears." *Table of Contents*. Ed. Fred Morcellino. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1985. Pages 13-56.
- \_\_\_ "Under the Snow." *Table of Contents*. Ed. Fred Morcellino. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1985. Pages 1-12.
- Rooney, Andrew. "In Praise of New York City." *A Few Minutes With Andy Rooney*. Ed. Andrew Rooney. New York, NY: Warner Books, Inc., 1981. Pages 135-149.
- Thoreau, Henry David. *Walden and Civil Disobedience*. New York: New American Library, 1980.
- Twain, Mark. *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*.**
- Williams, Carlos William. "Spring and All." *Collected Earlier Poems*. New Directions Publishing Corporation, 1938
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### Passion versus Responsibility:

A recurring theme in literature is the classic war between passion and responsibility. For instance a personal cause, a love, a desire for revenge, a determination to redress a wrong, or some other emotions may conflict with moral duty.

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**Bronte, Emily.** *Wuthering Heights*.

Como, Mario. "A Farewell to Public Office." *Representative American Speeches 1994-1995*. Ed. Owen Peterson. NY: Dublin, 1995. Pages.

**Golding, William.** *Lord of the Flies*.

Puller, Lewis B. *Fortunate Son*. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991.

Adrienne Rich. The Introductory Essay to *The Work of a Common Woman* by Judy Grahn.

Thoreau, Henry David. *Walden and Civil Disobedience*.

**Sophocles.** *Antigone*.

**Twain, Mark.** *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*.

## Pleasure and Disquietude:

A critic has said that one important measure of a superior work of literature is its ability to produce in the reader a healthy confusion of pleasure and disquietude. Choose works from a list of works of literary merit that have this effect. Then write a carefully nuanced research paper that examines the sources of the pleasure and disquietude and their thematic implications.

Arendt, Hannah. *On Violence*. San Diego, CA: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1970.

Downs, Hugh. "Practical Jokes." *Perspectives*. Atlanta, GA: Turner Publishing, 1995. Pages 186-190.

**Golding, William.** *Lord of the Flies*.

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Self Confidence/Ego Disease/Pride  
Appreciation (Recognition of Worth)  
Perfection/ Self Delusion:

Some works examine the universal problem encountered in a decision that many times has to be made between two ways of living. Choose works of literary merit that emphasize how getting to know yourself and living true to that perception is a theme for those works. Then write a carefully nuanced research paper that analyzes how self-knowledge leads to some kind of happiness or how the lack of self-knowledge leads to some kind of unhappiness.

- Bacon, Francis. "Of Nobility." *The Essays of Francis Bacon*. Ed. Clark Sutherland Northrup, Ph. D. Boston, Massachusetts: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1936. Pages 32-34.
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- Downs, Hugh. "Fifty Years of Broadcasting." *Perspectives*. Atlanta, GA: Turner Publishing, 1995. Pages 15-20.
- Eisenhower, Dwight D. "Quality of America's Fighting Men."
- Golding, William. *Lord of the Flies*.**
- Goodman, Ellen. "The Company Man." *The College Board Advanced Placement Examination*. 1992. online at [http://www1.broward.edu/~nplakcy/docs/company\\_man.html](http://www1.broward.edu/~nplakcy/docs/company_man.html)
- Mairs, Nancy. "I am a cripple. . . ." *The College Board Advanced Placement Examination*. 1992. online at <http://www.memorial.ecasd.k12.wi.us/Departments/LangArts/Dnelson/24%20Mairs%20On%20Being%20a%20Cripple%20Rev.%2012.05.pdf>
- McCourt, Frank. *Angela's Ashes*. New York: Scribner, 1996.
- McPhearson, James M. *Marching Towards Freedom*.
- Munro, Alice. "Friend of My Youth." *The Best American Short Stories 1991*. Ed. Alice Adams. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1991.
- Puller, Lewis B. *Fortunate Son*. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991.
- Reagan, Ronald. "Farewell Address." *Representative American Speeches 1988-89*. Ed. Owen Peterson. New York, NY: H.W. Wilson Company, 1989. Pages 8-18.
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- Thoreau, Henry David. *Walden and Civil Disobedience*.
- Twain, Mark. *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*.**
- Wills, Garry. *Certain Trumpets: The Call of Leaders*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1994.
- Wolff, Tobias. "Sister." *Prize Stories 1985*. Ed. William Abrahams. New York: Double Day Dell Publishing Group, 1985.
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Sin/Temptation/Evil:

- Aiken, Conrad.** "Impulse." *Short Story Masterpieces*. Ed. Robert Warren and Albert Erskine. New York, NY: Dell Publishing, 1980. Pages 15-30.
- Algren, Nelson.** "A Bottle of Milk for Mother." *Short Story Masterpieces*. Ed. Robert Warren and Albert Erskine. New York, NY: Dell Publishing, 1980. Pages 30-50.
- Collier, John.** "Witch's Money." *Short Story Masterpieces*. Ed. Robert Warren and Albert Erskine. New York, NY: Dell Publishing, 1980. Pages 79-89.
- Erdich, Louise.** "Saint Marie." *Prize Stories 1985*. Ed. Williams Abrahams. Garden City, NY: Doubleday and Company, Inc. 1985. Pages.
- Golding, William.** *Lord of the Flies*.
- McCourt, Frank.** *Angela's Ashes*. New York: Scribner, 1996.
- Soto, Gary.** "Guilty Six-Year-Old Self" The College Board Advanced Placement Examination. 1992.
- Thoreau, Henry David.** *Walden and Civil Disobedience*. New York: New American Library, 1980.
- Twain, Mark.** *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*.
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The Limitations of Society  
Ridicule/Satire:

Some works are written to criticize some limitation implicit in today's society. Choose works of literary merit that are critical of a similar American value. Briefly define the common limitation implicit in the works chosen; analyze how the characters in the works respond to or are affected by this similar standard; then write a carefully reasoned research paper that argues for or against the validity of the implied criticisms.

- Arendt, Hannah. *On Violence*. San Diego, CA: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1970.
- Bellow, Saul. "Graven Images." *The Best American Essays 1998*. Ed. Robert Atwan. New York, NY: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1998. Pages 33-38.
- Conrad, Joseph. "An Outpost of Progress." *Short Story Masterpieces*. Ed. Robert Warren and Albert Erskine. New York, NY: Dell Publishing, 1980. Pages 89-119.**
- Crane, Stephen. "The Bridge Comes to Yellow Sky." *Short Story Masterpieces*. Ed. Robert Warren and Albert Erskine. New York, NY: Dell Publishing, 1980. Pages 119-136.**
- Downs, Hugh. "Mona Lisa and Leonardo DaVinci." *Perspectives*. Atlanta, GA: Turner Publishing, 1995. Pages 121-125.
- \_\_\_ "Smell." *Perspectives*. Atlanta, GA: Turner Publishing, 1995. Pages 129-133.
- \_\_\_ "Tipping." *Perspectives*. Atlanta, GA: Turner Publishing, 1995. Pages 181-188.
- Ellison, Ralph. *The Invisible Man*.
- Fitzgerald, F. Scott. *The Great Gatsby*.**
- Golding, William. *Lord of the Flies*.**
- James, Henry. *Daisy Miller*.
- Jonson, Ben.
- King, Martin Luther. "Why We Can't Wait."
- McPhearson, James M. *Marching Towards Freedom*.
- Nabokov, Vladimir.
- Thomas, Lewis. "On the Need for Asylums." *Late Night Thoughts*. Ed. Thomas Lear. Canada: The Viking Press, 1983.
- Thoreau, Henry David. *Walden and Civil Disobedience*. New York: New American Library, 1980.
- Twain, Mark. *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*.**
- \_\_\_ "Queen Victoria's Jubilee." *The Complete Essays of Mark Twain*. Ed. Charles Neider. Garden City, NY: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1963. Pages 685-689.
- E. B. White. "A Member of a Party of One." Letter. *The New York Herald*. 29 November 1947. found online at <http://www.startribune.com/stories/1389/26051.html>**
- Wharton, Edith. *The Age of Innocence*.
- Wright, Richard. *Native Son*.
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Violence/ Cruelty/ Fear/ Revenge/ Punishment/  
Hatred/ Evil:

Violence is a predominant thread in the setting of many works of literary merit. Choose works of literary merit in which the reader is confronted with a scene or scenes of violence. Then write a carefully nuanced research paper which explores the nature of this violence, its effect on the characters or the reader, and its application to the universal human experience.

- Arendt, Hannah. *On Violence*. San Diego, CA: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1970.
- Carver, Raymond. "Where I'm Calling From."** *The Best American Short Stories 1983*. Ed. Anne Tyler. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1983. Pages 68-84.
- Churchill, Winston. *The Second World War*. Vol. 5. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1979.
- Erdich, Louise. "Snares." *The Best American Short Stories 1988*. Ed. Mark Helprin. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1988. Pages 121-151.
- Ellison, Ralph. *The Invisible Man*.
- Fitzgerald, F. Scott. *The Great Gatsby*.**
- Golding, William. *Lord of the Flies*.**
- Greene, Graham. *Brighton Rock*.
- Heller, Joseph. *Catch-22*.
- Malamud, Bernard. "God's Wrath." *The Best American Short Stories 1973*. Ed. Martha Foley. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1973. Pages 221-227.
- McPhearson, James M. *Marching Towards Freedom*.
- Munro, Alice. "Save the Reaper." *The Best American Short Stories 1999*. Ed. Amy Tan. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1999. Pages 273-294.
- O'Connor, Flannery. *Wise Blood*.
- Oates, Joyce Carol. "The Swimmers." *Prize Stories 1991*. Ed. William Abrahams. New York: Double Day Dell Publishing Group, 1992.
- — — "Why Don't You Come Live With Me? It's Time." *Prize Stories 1991*. Ed. William Abrahams. New York: Double Day Dell Publishing Group, 1992. Pages 60-74.
- Ozick, Cynthia. "The Shawl." *The Best American Short Stories 1981*. Ed. Hortense Calisher. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1981. Pages 271-275.
- Puller, Lewis B. *Fortunate Son*. New York: Grove Weidenfeld, 1991.
- Reno, Janet. "Combating Crime." *Representative American Speeches 1993-1994*. Vol. 66. Ed. Owen Peterson. New York, NY: H. W. Wilson Company, 1994. Pages 31-41.
- Thoreau, Henry David. *Walden and Civil Disobedience*. New York: New American Library, 1980.
- Tuchman, Barbara. *The Guns of August*. New York, NY: MacMillan Company, 1962.
- Twain, Mark. *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*.**
- Whitehill, Joseph. "Day of the Last Rock Fight"
- Wright, Richard. *Native Son*.