



KENNEDY CATHOLIC PREPARATORY SCHOOL

A.P. Literature and Composition: Summer 2026

Assignment #1

Please read “The Writer’s Life and Purpose”, William Faulkner’s Nobel Prize for Literature acceptance speech. It is available online at

http://nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/literature/laureates/1949/faulkner-speech.html

Please read *Antigone*, a classical Greek tragedy by Sophocles. You can purchase a paperback edition (most likely part of the *Oedipus* trilogy) or access it free online at www.gutenberg.org. If you remember reading *Oedipus the King* or studying about Oedipus in the introduction to Greek mythology, you will recall that Antigone is a daughter of the eponymous character.

After reading the two works, write a ¶ of approximately 10 -15 sentences in which you apply Faulkner’s assertions about the purpose of the writer and writing to *Antigone* and its playwright. In other words, how does Sophocles (through this tragedy) reflect Faulkner’s assessments of writing and the writer? In your ¶, include one direct quotation from “The Writer’s Life and Purpose” and one from *Antigone*. Although you do not need to use parenthetical citation, be sure to attribute each quotation to a speaker.

Assignment # 2

Please read *Heart of Darkness* by Joseph Conrad. You can purchase a paperback edition or download it free from iBooks. Set during the time of European Imperialism, it takes readers deep into the African Congo. With regard to **diction**, you will note that some words are offensive and demeaning; in short, they are antithetical to the Christian exhortation “Love thy neighbor” and to the Catholic belief of being created *imago Dei*. In our writing, class discussion, or assessments, we will not cite such excerpts. Among other things, we will focus on literary criticism and this novella’s place in the British literary canon (with its rich symbolism, evocative prose, moral & psychological significance, and Marlow’s epiphany.) While reading, ponder these two critical statements:

- ❖ “Africa as a metaphysical battlefield devoid of all recognizable humanity, into which the wandering European enters at his peril. Can nobody see the preposterous and perverse arrogance in thus reducing Africa to the role of props for the break-up of one petty European mind?” (Nigerian novelist Chinua Achebe, 1975)
- ❖ “... it [*Heart of Darkness*] tends to be celebrated for bearing witness to human rights atrocities and the veils of Imperialism or excoriated for complacently reproducing the racist assumptions of its historical era.” (English Professor A. Michael Matin, 2003)

Then, in a short essay (approximately 5 – 7 ¶’s), support one of these interpretations. Your writing must include a brief introduction and conclusion as well as one direct quotation from the criticism and one from the novella. Although you do not need to use parenthetical citation, be sure to attribute each quotation to a speaker. Both writing assignments must be your own work (do *not* consult the internet or one another) and must be computer-generated according to MLA format. Hard copies will be collected on the first day of classes, **September 11**. During the first few weeks of classes, we will discuss these three literary works, and you will be additionally assessed. Enjoy the summer (in between the reading, musing, and writing!) 😊 Questions? Please email Miss Willis: swillis@kennedycatholic.org