

AP English Literature summer reading revision opportunity
***The Poisonwood Bible* close-reading, literary analysis, and vocabulary**
DUE Tuesday 4 September 2012

vocabulary

You will show that they can use our first forty tone words (lists 1-5) by constructing sentences. All of your sentences must describe characters, plot, and ideas from *The Poisonwood Bible*, *Frankenstein*, or poetry that you have read thus far.

- For students who did not complete summer reading at all, compose 40 contextually accurate sentences (20 including contrast or antonym, 20 including parallelism or synonym).
- For students with a score below 70, compose 30 contextually accurate sentences (15 including contrast or antonym, 15 including parallelism or synonym).
- For students with a score between 70-80, compose 20 contextually accurate sentences (10 including contrast or antonym, 10 including parallelism or synonym).
- For students with a score above 80, they will compose 10 contextually accurate sentences (5 including contrast or antonym, 5 including parallelism or synonym).

close-reading and analysis from Book Two: The Revelation

Directions:

Analyze the five quotations below.

- For students who did not complete summer reading at all, compose paragraphs in response to all of them.
- For students with a score below 70, compose paragraphs in response to three of them.
- For students with a score above 70, compose paragraphs in response to two of them.

For each, in a well-developed paragraph, convincingly explain how the passage illustrates a central theme of the novel. You need to assert a central interpretive idea in your topic sentence, and then support your interpretation with strong evidence (from the quotation as well as other parts of the text)—evidence which you explain clearly. You may need to establish the context of the scene you discuss, but you must incorporate relevant literary analysis terminology as well as direct reference to the text in support of your ideas. Ultimately, your task is to analyze what this quotation means and why it is significant to the theme(s) of the novel—not to summarize the plot.

Themes:

1. Manipulation and Betrayal

How does one character influence and/or sway other(s) and, in doing so, assert control? In what way does one character deceive and/or turn him back on the other—and for what purpose? What are the effects of this behavior?

2. Hypocrisy and Facade

How and why does a character pretend to be what he or she is not? What disguises do the characters wear and why? What is the effect of the concealment?

3. Family Bonds and Binds

How are the characters connected as family? What dilemmas and quandaries does this connection produce for them? How does each react, and what are the consequences of these reactions?

4. Duality and Complexity

In what ways do the characters possess conflicting traits? What about them do we admire and what do we find detestable? How do the characters react to their own dichotomy? What results from the conflict between their two sides?

Quotations:

1. "Without a thought, as the twin whose legs never failed her, she shifted the basket to her left hip and took a giant step over a pyramid of oranges. I stretched out my hand to her. Right there as she reached for it, though, she got stuck somehow, mid-straddle over the oranges, unable to bring the other foot over. *Phhffff!* The woman squatting beside the oranges leaped up hissing, slicing her hands like scissors blades at the two of us, scorching me with eyes so hot the angry chocolate irises seemed to be melting into the white. A row of men on a bench looked up from their bowls of new beer and stared at us with the same clouded eyes, all motioning for me to move my child: *stupid ghost! non-person!* straddling a woman's market-day wealth. I can't stop being embarrassed by the memory of myself and Leah there with her genitals—bare, for all anyone knew—suspended over a woman's oranges. A foreign mother and child assuming themselves in charge, suddenly slapped down to nothing by what they all saw us to be." (*Orleanna*, page 89)
2. "But Nathan wouldn't hear my worries. For him, our life was as simple as paying in cash and sticking the receipt in your breast pocket: we had the Lord's protection, he said, because we came to Africa in His service. Yet we sang in church "*Tata Nzolo*"! Which means *Father in Heaven* or *Father of Fish Bait* depending on just how you sing it, and that pretty well summed up my quandary. I could never work out whether we were to view religion as a life-insurance policy or a life sentence. I can understand a wrathful God who'd just as soon dangle us all from a hook. And I can understand a tender, unprejudiced Jesus. But I could never quite feature the two of them living in the same house. You wind up walking on eggshells, never knowing which *Tata Nzolo* is home at the moment." (*Orleanna*, page 98)
3. "We soon lost interest, though, for there was no suspense at all: the Congolese children always passed us right by on their march to victory. In our efforts to eke the most mileage out of a scissors step or whatever, my sisters and I sometimes forgot to ask (or Adah to mouth) "Mother May I?" Whereas the other children never, ever forgot. For them, shouting "Ma-da-me-yi" was one rote step in a memorized chain of steps, not a courtesy to be used or dropped the way "yes, ma'am" and "thank you" are for us. The Congolese children's understanding of the game didn't even take courtesy or rudeness into account, if you think about it, any more than Methuselah did when he railed us with hell and damnation. This came as a strange letdown, to see how the game always went to those who knew the rules without understanding the lesson." (*Leah*, page 112)
4. "When he spoke of diamonds I naturally thought of Marilyn Monroe in her long gloves and purse lips whispering "Diamonds Are a Girl's Best Friend." My best friend Dee Dee Baker and I have snuck off to see M. M. and Brigitte Bardot both at the matinee (Father would flat-out kill me if he knew), so you see I know a thing or two about diamonds. But when I looked at Anatole's wrinkled brown knuckles and pinkish palms, I pictured hands like those digging diamonds out of the Congo dirt and got to thinking, Gee, does Marilyn Monroe even know where they come from? Just picturing her in her satin gown and a Congolese diamond digger in the same universe gave me the weebie jeebies. So I didn't think about it anymore." (*Rachel*, page 127)
5. "I found I could not breathe as I watched his face tell this story, and the faces of the others as they received the news. My sisters could not comprehend Tata Ndu's word salad of French and Kikongo, so were merely spellbound by the presence of a celebrity on the porch. I was the last thing on their minds, even Leah's. Leah who had left me to the lion's den in question. But my mother: Yes. No! She understood. She had hurried out to the porch from the cooking hut and still carried a large wooden paddle in her hand, which dripped steaming water onto the floor. Part of her hair fell in a wave across her face. The rest of her seemed unalive, like a pale wax model of my mother: the woman who could not fight fire with fire, even to save her children. Such affliction I saw on her face I briefly believed myself dead. I imagined the lion's eyes on me like the eyes of an evil man, and felt my own flesh being eaten. I became nothing.
Our Father rose and said in a commanding voice, 'Let us all pray to the Lord for mercy and understanding.'
Tata Ndu did not bow his head but raised it, not happily but proudly. Then I understood that he had won, and my father had lost. Tata Ndu came here personally to tell us that the gods of his village did not take kindly to the minister of corruption. As a small sign of Their displeasure, They ate his daughter alive." (*Adah*, page 140)