English 10H

Victorian Literature (plus Jane Austen)

Select one of the texts listed below to read between now and January 12. If you would like to select a text by one of these authors that is not listed below, check with me first.

**Jane Austen** (1775-1817) – romantic fiction, novels of manners; books were written in secret and published “by a lady”

*Emma* – inspiration for *Clueless*; extremely lively; about meddling and meddlers

*Persuasion –* the nature of love and loyalty; the good and the bad of being persuaded and not persuaded

*Sense and Sensibility* – relationship between sisters; rationality versus emotion

*Mansfield Park –* only one with a main character who isn’t a strong, independent woman

\*Do not read *Pride and Prejudice*

**Charles Dickens** (1812-1870) – journalist and novelist, social critic, prolific writer, little formal education; many of his works were first published as serials; Dickens was paid by the word – all the books below are 800+ pages except for *Great Expectations*

*David Copperfield*  - story of a life; fabulous cast of characters

*Great Expectations* – coming of age story of an orphan

*Bleak House –* about a legal case that goes on forever

*Little Dorritt –* set in the poorhouse (debtors prison)

\*Do not read *A Christmas Carol*

**Charlotte Brontë** (1816-1855) – novelist and poet, worked as a governess, published under the pen name Currer Bell,

*Jane Eyre –* horrible boarding school; development of emotional and spiritual understanding and identity

**Emily Brontë** (1818-1848) – novelist and poet, Charlotte’s younger sister, published under the pen name Ellis Bell

*Wuthering Heights –* jealousy and vengeance

Mary Ann Evans (1819-1880) – novelist, journalist, and translator known by her pen name, **George Eliot**; novels are known for psychological insight and realism

*Middlemarch* – subtitled *A Study of Provincial Life*; multiple plots with large cast of characters

Timeline:

Now – select a book and start reading

Tuesday, February 23: 50-75 pages – reflection in class

Tuesday, March 1: 50% - in class writing assignment

Tuesday, March 8: finish your book – in class writing assignment

Friday, March 11: tea, scones, and character exercises

Tea Party Presentations – Friday, March 11

**Come to class dressed as a character from your book and carrying at least one additional object that you can use to inform the class about your character.**

**Costume**: Must include THREE separate elements that represent your character. The three elements can be articles of clothing, accessories, hair, or makeup.

**Additional Object**: This object should in some way represent something important about your character.

**Presentation**: Staying in character, take one to two minutes to introduce yourself, explain your wardrobe choices for the day, and share your object. In doing so, we should learn both superficial and substantial details about your character. Whether it is through your wardrobe discussion or the object, you must touch upon:

* Demographic info (where you live, when you lived, appearance, social class, family status, profession)
* Significant life events and / or experiences
* Values and beliefs

Practice your presentation ahead of time. The ideal presentation length is ninety seconds, and you will be cut off at two minutes.

This assignment is worth 25 points. Using the rubric below, full credit will be given to students who enthusiastically present their characters through costumes and props, stay in character for the whole class, and who successfully convey the information listed above through their short presentation.

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|  | excellent | very good | acceptable | does not do |
| costume (at least three elements) |  |  |  |  |
| significance of object |  |  |  |  |
| demographic info |  |  |  |  |
| significant life events |  |  |  |  |
| values and beliefs |  |  |  |  |
| stays in character |  |  |  |  |