

## Reading Record Cards

One of the major problems that confronts students taking the Advanced Placement English Literature exam is the Free Response question, which requires that the student choose a work from his own reading experience to support his answer. One system that you will use to prepare for this event is Reading Record Cards.

You will create notes/note cards—preferably electronic (MS Word, Excel, Google Doc, Quizlet, etc.)—with information about the books “of literary merit” you have selected and read. These should include books you have read in previous English classes, on your own, or in the upcoming school years. You will file the note cards in alphabetical order by title. Eventually, you will build a library of information. You will use these as a flashcard review system when studying for the AP test. To ensure you do not procrastinate, I will be checking these cards throughout the year; due dates will be set accordingly.

The format for the “cards” is:

Student name	Card #
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• TITLE, AUTHOR (date born-date died/where lived) PUBLICATION DATE OF WORK [original, not current edition]</li><li>• SETTING: place/time</li><li>• THEME OR MAIN IDEA: [in one declarative sentence]</li><li>• Brief PLOT SYNOPSIS:</li><li>• MAJOR CHARACTERS [with brief descriptions of each; also identify Protagonist and Antagonist]</li><li>• Major SYMBOLS, Patterns of Symbols, or distinctive ALLUSIONS present</li><li>• DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS of the work</li><li>• A quotation from the work, which is representative of the theme of the work as a whole, with page number of source.</li></ul>	

Number the card on the front in the top right corner.

### NOTES:

- “Brief” means *brief*: you should not use more than about 4 to 6 sentences for the synopsis.
- If handwriting your cards, make sure your writing is legible. If I am unable to read it, I will not accept the work.
- Distinguishing characteristics of the work can be as brief as one word or as lengthy as a couple of sentences. (*The Poisonwood Bible*, for example, uses multiple narrators, time settings, and locations; *The Great Gatsby* uses an unreliable narrator and extensive flashbacks.) If you struggle with this point, please send me a message, and I will help clarify.
- Submitting summaries downloaded from or based on websites such as SparkNotes, Pink Monkey, Cliff Notes, etc., constitutes plagiarism—which is cheating. This is NOT acceptable and will be dealt with severely.