



# Addison Trail High School

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Welcome to your Advanced Placement Literature Course! For your summer reading, a cursory understanding of schools of literary criticism will be the ideal position from which to begin the course. Literary theory, in simple terms, is the act of reading a piece of literature with a specific perspective or lens to allow you to consider a variety of characteristics within a school of theory. To read with a specific critical lens is to read and analyze the details within the piece of literature and consider the bigger picture or message the author argues. To commence your summer reading, explore the following handouts detailing what literary theory is, and familiarize yourself with the school included, the Psychoanalytic Criticism:

## Psychoanalytic Criticism:

A few critical questions to consider are here, but see the handouts for the full list (some of you with Psychology class background may recognize the concepts within the questions):

- Are there prominent or recurring words in the piece that could have symbolic or hidden meanings? Could there be a subconscious reason for the author using these multi-dimensional words?
- What connections can we make between elements of the text and any archetypes? (Mask, Shadow, Anima, Animus)
- How does the protagonist reflect the hero of myth?
- Does the "hero" embark on a quest in either a physical or spiritual sense?
- What trials or ordeals does the protagonist face? What is the reward for overcoming them? What life lesson is ultimately learned?

For your summer assignment, you will apply the "Typical Questions" listed to one of the following short stories. Again, see the attached printouts to get a more detailed understanding of the theory and questions before you choose your focus. That focus should be tied to what you inferred while reading and annotating the story.

## Story options:

"Johnny Panic and the Bible of Dreams" by Sylvia Plath

"The Door" by E. B. White

"Ward No. 6" by Anton Chekhov

## Achieving The Highest Standards

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You may type the questions associated with your chosen critical lens as your prompts and respond to each in a journal style structure (complete sentences but not as formally organized as an essay). In your response, address how the author presents the story in relation to the questions and try to include specific examples from the story to support your answers.

If you misplace your summer reading information, or did not receive a letter or packet, extras will be available during business hours in the Addison Trail Guidance Office and the Addison Trail Library Media Center throughout the summer. We look forward to meeting and discussing these with you all. The summer assignment will be due the 3rd week of school, so after we meet you as a senior of Addison Trail's Class of 2024-2025, we will share the exact date. Stay well and enjoy the readings in a more comfortable setting.

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