

**Advanced Placement English Language and Composition (AP Lang)**  
**Summer Reading Assignment 2019 – Google Classroom Code: k3zndjd**  
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**INVITATION:** Please feel free to email me with questions, concerns, and/or comments. I will reply.

**TIP:** Remember, in this class you are a college student. Please approach the texts and coursework accordingly.

**TEXT:** Morrison, Toni. *Beloved*. New York: Vintage Books, 2004. Print. [ISBN 1-4000-3341-1]

**RATIONALE:** *Beloved* is a powerfully haunting novel, rich in gothic imagery. A ghost embodies the enduring legacy of the brutal, dehumanizing institution of slavery in the United States, from the middle passage to the “reconstruction” period. The fragmentary narrative structure weaves the past seamlessly into the present and the future to show the past as a powerful ghost-like force, the vestiges of which shape the present and the future. Each character’s peculiar consciousness and perspective artfully and disturbingly reveal the generational horror of slavery: the phenomenon of enslavement strips human beings of the very experiences that define the species. A 400-year legacy of chattel slavery in the Americas produced profoundly damaged people with warped conceptions of love and human worth. In addition to foregrounding your study of AP United States History in eleventh grade, this novel possesses precisely the complexity of aesthetic expression and richness of contextual scope our rigorous study of language, literature, rhetoric, argumentation, and composition demands.

### **INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE AP LANG SUMMER ASSIGNMENT**

**ASSIGNMENT:** Read Toni Morrison’s *Beloved* and use the template to complete your own notes on the text.

**DUE DATE:** The first day of school

**STEPS AND REQUIREMENTS:** Please...

- **Obtain Toni Morrison’s *Beloved*.** It’s available from the Santa Fe Public Library system and Amazon.com.
- **Read and annotate the “Notes from Thomas Foster’s *How to Read Literature...*”** posted on my **website** and our **Summer Reading 2018 Google Classroom (code: k3zndjd)**. **THINK about each of the numbered titles** on the outline (chapter titles of Foster’s book minus two that simply don’t fit) **before and as you read *Beloved***.
- **Read and annotate (use post-its if you borrow the book) Toni Morrison’s *Beloved*.**
  - Be patient with yourself as a reader. It’s a college-level text. Break it up into manageable chunks.
  - The narrative does NOT follow traditional chronology. Think of it as solving a mystery.
  - Expect that you will be shocked. The atrocities of the institution of slavery and its legacy are shocking.
  - USE THE AUDIO FILE ON OUR SUMMER READING GOOGLE CLASSROOM IF IT HELPS.
- **Re-read the “Notes from Thomas Foster’s *How to Read Literature Like a Professor...*”** and think about how each chapter (the numbered titles on the outline) fit into an analysis of Morrison’s *Beloved*.
- Using the **“Template for Foster Notes over Toni Morrison’s *Beloved*”** posted on my **website** and our **Summer Reading 2018 Google Classroom (code: k3zndjd)**, **type or write your own notes**, citing and explaining examples (at least three bullet points) from Morrison’s *Beloved* under each of Foster’s chapter titles. **For example:**

**Geography Matters...**

- Sweet Home was in the slave-state of Kentucky, and 124 Bluestone Road was in the free-state of Ohio representing the tension between the past and present that mark the text’s treatment of “rememory” and the historical “way stations” of the Underground Railroad.
- The Ohio River separating Kentucky and Ohio is an in-between or liminal space that separated the past and the present – a running stream of subconscious awareness of the Middle Passage that “gives birth” to *Beloved*.
- The clearing in the woods where Baby Suggs Holy preached from a stump signals a sacred space where African American people freely gathered to remember the deepest, darkest past, grieve its losses, and begin to heal its damage.

There is a ton of literary scholarship of varying quality on this novel. I encourage you to read it, but don’t let it contaminate your own powerful reading and analysis! You have brilliant things to say and Foster’s framework ought to help you say it.

This is an **exercise in analytical RE-READING**. Thus, you will need to **go back into the text again and again**. Beyond this summer assignment and school year, **you’ll use this critical practice for your entire academic and professional careers**. It matters, it’s difficult, and it’s lonely. Contact me if I can support you in this important work.