In AP Literature and Composition, you will read fiction texts and poetry from

different periods in history. This summer you will focus on American writer Kate Chopin’s novella *The Awakening* and her short story “Desiree’s Baby.”

For these assignments, you need to write them by hand in either blue or black ink. Make sure that the ink does not bleed through from the front of the paper to the back of the paper. These assignments are due the first day of class, and we will be working with the texts for the first few weeks of school; therefore, it is imperative that you complete the assignments. Moreover, each component is a separate grade.

***THE AWAKENING—*AP LIT SUMMER ASSIGNMENT**

Set in 1899 New Orleans and Louisiana Gulf coast, *The Awakening* centers on Edna Pontellier, and her struggle between her increasingly unorthodox views on femininity and motherhood with the prevailing social attitudes of the turn-of-the-century American South.

[Awakening6x9.p65 (sharpschool.com)](https://cdnsm5-ss3.sharpschool.com/UserFiles/Servers/Server_4204286/Image/Grade12%20TheAwakening.pdf) is a PDF with page numbers. I suggest that

you download a copy just in case something happens with the website. There are also short stories in the PDF, and “Desiree’s Baby” is included in this PDF. If you desire a physical copy of the book, please go to the library, and take one out.

1. In the novella *The Awakening,* there are different groups of people. Below is a list. The higher-ranking group is at the top. The lower ranking group is at the bottom. As you read, keep a chart for the quadroon, mulatto, and Black characters. Note what they do and what they say. What do you notice about their role in the novella? It is possible for a group to have limited or no speech.

* **Creoles:** white descendants of French or Spanish settlers around the Gulf of Mexico; a person of mixed black and Spanish or black and French descent
* **Acadians**: descendants of French Canadians deported to the South during the French and Indian War
* **quadroon**: a person of mixed black and white descent, with one black grandparent (thus, one quarter black)
* **mulatto** (mulattress): a person of mixed black and white descent, usually one white and one black parent
* **Black**: persons of African or Native Caribbean descent

**Written Task:** Refer to your chart, what do you notice about the “voices” of the quadroon, mulatto, and Black characters in the novella? What social comment is Chopin making about the role of these groups in Louisiana society? Write a fully developed paragraph—topic sentence, evidence, commentary, and a concluding sentence that responds to the questions posed above.

2. Create a dialectic journal for the symbols/motifs listed below. Pick three passages for each. Make sure that they are from the beginning, middle, end of the novella.

* 1. Birds
  2. Swimming/water
  3. Music/piano playing

Sample of a dialectic journal using *Night.* This example uses a simile, but you will focus on symbols/motifs. Use different color ink to show the different parts of your response. Make a key to that I know which color corresponds to which part.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Source Material (Provide a direct quotation or paraphrase and a parenthetical citation)** | **Respond, Analyze, and Evaluate** |
| **(What are you analyzing?)**  ***Simile***  **“The snow was like a carpet, very gentle, very warm” (83).** | ***I can picture the men standing in the concentration camp, watching the snow blanket the ground. It is silent there. The snow-covered ground is smooth and soft. Wiesel describes the snow as being “gentle” and “warm.” This comparison is not what one would expect. Standing barefoot in the snow would be very painful. The cold would cut deep into one’s feet. So why does he say it is warm? Maybe his feet are frozen, numb to the pain. Perhaps the snow provides insulation from night’s bitter cold. This comparison creates a sense of peace, a moment without terror and fear. It is as if he is home again, safe and warm*** |

***THE AWAKENING* PAIRED POEMS**

1. Read Edgar Allan Poe’s [THE LAKE —— TO —— by Edgar Allan Poe - Poems | poets.org](https://poets.org/poem/lake) and decide how that poem impacted Chopin’s diction, imagery, tone, and theme in *The Awakening*.

**WRITTEN TASK:** Write a paragraph which analyzes the similarities between Poe and Chopin. Focus on diction, imagery, tone and theme.

1. The 1957 poem, “Not Waving but Drowning,” has similar concepts such as isolation, loneliness, alienation as *The Awakening.* [Not Waving but Drowning by Stevie Smith | Poetry Foundation](https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/46479/not-waving-but-drowning)

**2A**. Make a chart that answers the narration and structure questions listed below.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **SKILL--NARRATION** | *The Awakening* | “Not Waving but Drowning” |
| 4.A Identify and describe the narrator or speaker of a text. |  |  |
| 4.B Identify and explain the function of point of view in a the text. |  |  |
| 4.C Identify and describe details, diction, or syntax in a text that reveal a narrator’s or speaker’s perspective. |  |  |
| 4.D Explain how a narrator’s reliability affects a text. |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| **SKILL--STRUCTURE** |  |  |
| 3.A Identify and describe how plot orders events in a text. |  |  |
| 3.B Explain the function of a particular sequence of events in a plot. |  |  |
| 3.C Explain the function of structure in a text. |  |  |
| 3.D Explain the function of contrasts within a text. (Focus on setting, conflicts, symbols, or ideologies NOT characters) |  |  |
| 3.F Explain the function of conflict in a text. |  |  |

**2B. WRITTEN TASK:** In a paragraph that includes a topic sentence, evidence, commentary and a concluding sentence, compare how Chopin and Smith use BOTH narration and structure to convey either loneliness, isolation, or alienation. Pick one and focus on analyzing that. Make sure to vary your sentence beginnings.

**“DESIREE’S BABY”—AP LIT SUMMER ASSIGNMENT**

"Désirée's Baby" is an 1893 [short story](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Short_story) by the American writer [Kate Chopin](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kate_Chopin). It is about [miscegenation](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Miscegenation)—in this story this means a baby born to people from different races--in [Creole](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Louisiana_Creole_people) [Louisiana](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Louisiana) during the [antebellum](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Antebellum_era) period (in a nutshell, the antebellum is the time of slave plantations in the south.)

**1.** After you read “Desiree’s Baby” you need to focus on the figurative language/ literary devices used in the story. Distinguish between the literal meaning and the figurative meaning of words/phrases. Themes to consider are as follows: 1) Love softens and blinds people 2) Psychological effects of racism and injustice 3) Economic inequalities of the antebellum south. Feel free to develop your own theme. Remember, a theme is NOT one word.

**1A. COMPLETE THE CHART**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Figurative Language | What is being compared | A) What is the metaphorical meaning?  B) What does this add to the text and the theme? |
| Simile—“The blood turned like ice in her veins…” |  |  |
| Simile—“The roof came down steep and black like a cowl.” |  |  |
| Simile—“The baby, half naked-lay asleep upon her own great mahogany bed, that was like a sumptuous throne, with its satin-linked half-canopy.” |  |  |
| “She turned away like one stunned by a blow.” |  |  |
| Metaphor—“Desire was striving to penetrate the threatening mist that she felt closing about her.” |  |  |
| Metaphor—“’Armand,’ she called him, in a voice that must have stabbed him.” |  |  |

**2. FORESHADOWING** is used in the story. Find at least two passages/quotes, with page number, and explain how they foreshadow the ending.

**3. IRONY** is used in this story. Since there are three types of irony—dramatic, situational, and verbal—decide what type(s) are used. Give quotes to support your response. Analyze the function of irony in the story.

**4.** **CLOSE READING:** Below is a passage from the story. This one passage contains imagery, symbolism, and setting. In the American and British literature, we will read this year, seasons have underlying meanings. Because we live in NJ, the seasons mimic what happens in our seasons.

**Winter**=season of death (think most plants in our area die before winter) Now in literature, this could be a literal death of a character or it could be a metaphorical death of hopes, dreams or desires.

**Spring**=season of rebirth (yup, this is when most flowers come back to life)

**Summer=**season when things/truths are revealed and/or people act on basic desires and impulses due to the heat (think shenanigans at the Jersey Shore)

**Fall=**season of decay or when things start to fall apart (the leaves start to fall from the trees and the flowers begin to loose their petals)

**4. Analyze** the passage below and answer the following:

1. Why start the story in summer and end in fall?
2. Why is the sun “sinking” (setting)? Why isn’t the sun beginning to rise?
3. Why does Desiree not change out of the “thin white garment nor the slippers”?
4. Why is the garment white and not another color? (You need to think about symbolism here)
5. Why does Chopin, the author, end with Desiree having “bruised her tender feet…tore her thin gown”?
6. Why does Desiree head into a field where “negroes were picking cotton” and is deserted?
7. Why did she not take the main road?
8. Why does Desiree “disappear among the reeds and willows”?
9. Does Desiree go back to her mother’s home or does she kill herself and the baby? Justify your answer.

**PASSAGE:**

It was an October afternoon; the sun was just sinking. Out in the still fields the negroes were picking cotton.

Desiree had not changed the thin white garment nor the slippers which she wore.

Her hair was uncovered and the sun’s rays brought a golden gleam from its brown meshes. She did not take the broad, beaten road which led to the far-off plantation of Valmondé. She walked across a deserted field, where the stubble bruised her tender feet, so delicately shod, and tore her thin gown to shreds.

She disappeared among the reeds and willows that grew thick along the banks of the deep, sluggish bayou; and she did not come back again.

**4A. WRITING TASK: DRAWING CONCLUSIONS**

Write a paragraph deciding what happens to Desiree and the baby at the end of the story. Include a topic sentence, quotes, provide commentary. Finally, include a concluding sentence. Remember, vary your sentence beginnings.

**5. WRITING TASK: LITERARY ANALYSIS**

Pick one of the tasks that you analyzed (1-3) and write an analysis paragraph that has a clear topic sentence, textual evidence (quotes) from the text, commentary, and a concluding paragraph that refers to your topic sentence. Additionally, connect the literary element to a theme in the short story. Themes to consider are as follows: 1) Love softens and blinds people 2) Psychological effects of racism and injustice 3) Economic inequalities of the antebellum south. You may pick a different theme if you wish but remember that a theme is not one word.