

## IB 11<sup>th</sup> Grade Summer Reading 2019

### ***Their Eyes Were Watching God*, Zora Neale Hurston "Good Country People" by Flannery O'Connor**

The Hurston book can be found at libraries and anywhere books are sold. For the O'Connor story, please get a copy of her complete short stories. We will be reading 5-10 of her short stories for an in depth IB study.

Choose one prompt and write a coherent essay in MLA format in at least 700 words. Place a word count at the end of the essay. The paper must be typed. As you work on these essays, be sure that you are properly addressing the prompt. In addition to developing the topic, each essay should meet the criteria listed below:

- It should reflect your close reading and comprehension of the work.
- It should include a clear thesis that identifies the topic and makes a claim about that topic.
- It should include several body paragraphs that provide evidence to support the thesis. (Each essay must have at least four citations from the primary sources.)
- It should show evidence of careful editing and knowledge of the rules of standard English. It should also demonstrate adherence to the current guidelines of MLA documentation style (including a works cited page). If you are still confused about MLA format, consult Purdue OWL. I expect MLA citations and paper format.

1. Read about Feminist Criticism on Purdue OWL. In her critical analysis of *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, Jennifer Jordan comments on feminism in the novel: "Hurston writes *Their Eyes Were Watching God* to prove the emptiness of the middle-class woman's isolation and the falseness of her seeming social elevation" (Jordan). How do both the novel and "Good Country People" exemplify the quote? Consider the relationship between men and women and the power relationships between men and women. Think about what the works say about the operations of patriarchy and the possibilities of resisting patriarchy.

2. Read about New Historicism and Cultural Studies on Purdue OWL. Rudolph Byrd, a scholar of African American studies, analyzed the cultural connections in *Their Eyes Were Watching God*: "[T]he beauty of *Their Eyes Were Watching God* is a product of Hurston's prideful attachment to the land and the life, but particularly the Black life, of Florida" (Byrd). The quote refers to the setting of Zora Neale Hurston's life and works. Equally important is setting in Flannery O'Connor's work. Both works consider the early to mid-1900's southeastern culture. Analyze both works through the lens of New Historicism. How do they both fit together to draw a picture of the south in the early 1900's? Consider the following in your analysis: how the language reflects the current events, how events are a product of the author's culture, how the works interpret the cultural climate of the day, and how the work considers traditionally marginalized populations.

Jordan, Jennifer. "Feminist Fantasies: Zora Neale Hurston's 'Their Eyes Were Watching God'." *Contemporary Literary Criticism*, edited by Roger Matuz and Cathy Falk, vol. 61, Gale, 1990. *Literature Resource Center*, [http://link.galegroup.com/apps/doc/H1100001344/LitRC?u=tel\\_s\\_tsla&sid=LitRC&xid=b726f1a9](http://link.galegroup.com/apps/doc/H1100001344/LitRC?u=tel_s_tsla&sid=LitRC&xid=b726f1a9). Accessed 26 Feb. 2019. Originally published in *Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature*, vol. 7, no. 1, Spring 1988, pp. 105-117.

Byrd, Rudolph P. "Shared orientation and narrative acts in 'Cane,' 'Their Eyes Were Watching God,' and 'Meridian.'" (books by African-American authors)." *MELUS*, vol. 17, no. 4, 1991, p. 41+. *Literature Resource Center*, [http://link.galegroup.com/apps/doc/A13471994/LitRC?u=tel\\_s\\_tsla&sid=LitRC&xid=74ed10a7](http://link.galegroup.com/apps/doc/A13471994/LitRC?u=tel_s_tsla&sid=LitRC&xid=74ed10a7). Accessed 26 Feb. 2019.