

11th Grade Summer Reading Assignment

The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn by Mark Twain

Assignment: In addition to reading the novel, you are to find a piece a literary criticism for the work of literature. When you return to school be sure to bring your criticism and your book. The best place to find literary criticism is in a library. There are entire volumes of books devoted to criticisms such as *Twentieth- Century Literary Criticism and Contemporary Literary Criticism (CLC)*. Check out the reference section at your local. Only **published criticism** can be used from the internet. Do **not** use *Cliff's Notes*, *Spark Notes* or any other plot summary! These are not reliable sources. Be prepared to discuss your criticisms when you return. You should be able to discuss points that you agree or disagree with.

What is a literary criticism?

A literary criticism is based on a judgment a writer is making regarding an aspect of the book. The writer offers an opinion about the worth of the literary work, and the opinion is supported by an argument that offers supporting evidence. The writer should not merely make an assertion but must develop an argument based on evidence (specific examples). Some forms of criticism aim to judge works as either good or bad; others aim to demonstrate how a text works or how it is representative of society at that time. Criticisms reflect the beliefs and values of different cultural groups and different historical periods.

Rationale: It is our hope that by reading professional literary criticism you will gain an understanding of the difference between summary and opinion and begin the process of both analyzing argumentation and writing your own argument